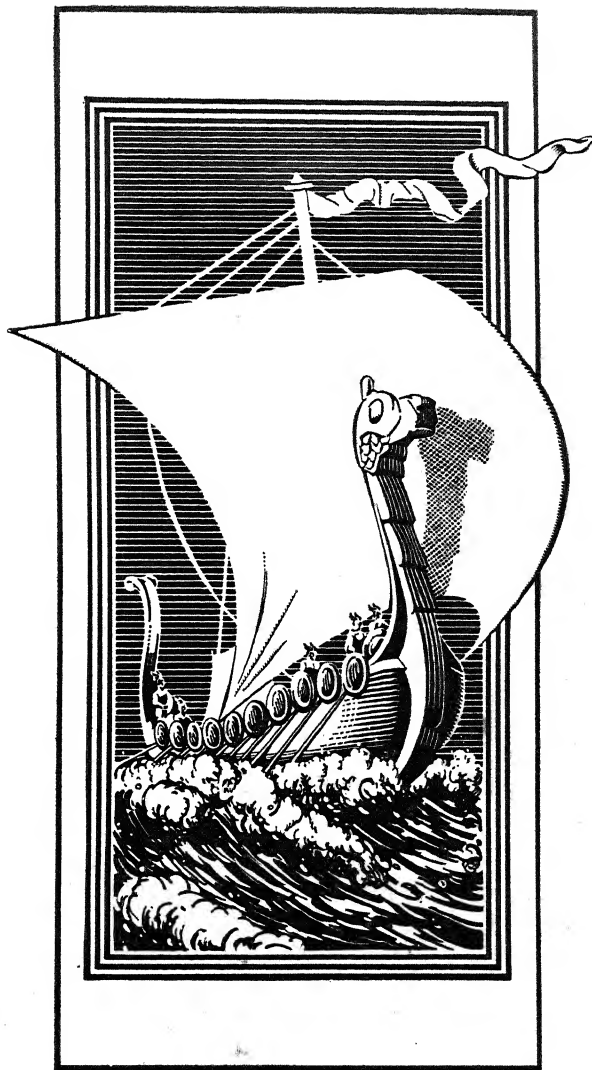






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# Richards Topical Encyclopedia

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VOLUME ELEVEN



Edited by

ERNEST HUNTER WRIGHT

and

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and

Director of Art

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## KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

ā, as in mäte	oi, as in toil
ā̇, as in senāte	oo, as in soon
â, as in hâir	oo, as in book
ă, as in hăt	ou, as in shout
ä, as in fäther	s, as in so
ä, a sound between ä and ă, as in	sh, as in ship
cästle	th, as in thumb
ch, as in chest	th, as in thus
ē, as in ēve	ū, as in cūre
ē, as in rēlate	ū, as in accūrate
ě, as in běnd	û, as in fûr
ē, as in readēr	ű, as in űs
g, as in go	ü, a sound formed by pronouncing ē
ī, as in bīte	with the lips in the position for
ī, as in ĩnn	oo, as in the German <i>über</i> and the
k, as in key	French <i>une</i>
K, the guttural sound of ch, as in	zh, as in azure
the German <i>ach</i> , or the Scotch <i>loch</i>	’, an indication that a vowel sound
n, as in not	occurs, but that it is elided and
N, the French nasal sound, as in <i>bon</i>	cannot be identified, as in apple
ng, the English nasal sound, as in	(ăp’l)
strong	A heavy accent (’) follows a syllable
ō, as in bōne	receiving the principal stress,
ō̇, as in Christōpher	and a lighter accent (˘) follows a
ô, as in lôrd	syllable receiving a secondary
ö, as in hôt	stress.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

### No. 1

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## MAN'S FIRST PICTURES

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

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How and where man's earliest known pictures were found. 11-1

How they happen to have been preserved. 11-1

What leisure time had to do with their production. 11-2

The kind of life that was lived in the caves. 11-2

The tools of the Old and the New Stone Ages compared. 11-2

Why the animals were well drawn. 11-4

Why drawing was a feat of memory. 11-4

Magic values of the cave man's pictures. 11-4

### *Things to Think About*

What kind of people were the first known artists?

What did the climate of 16,000 years ago have to do with their lives? With their art?

Why did they draw animals

mainly?

What happened to the cave man's art in the New Stone Age?

What is the effect of our mode of life to-day upon our art?

### *Picture Hunt*

Why did the cave man artist know his animals well? 11-1

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### *Habits and Attitudes*

The cave man who hunted woolly mammoths and fierce bison in

the Ice Age 16,000 years ago could also be a delicate artist.

### *Summary Statement*

The earliest known art of man—that found in the Spanish caves—indicates that much had gone before. Man has probably recorded his life in art from the

beginning of time. The cave man who hunted fierce bison 16,000 years ago could also create fine art.

(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)



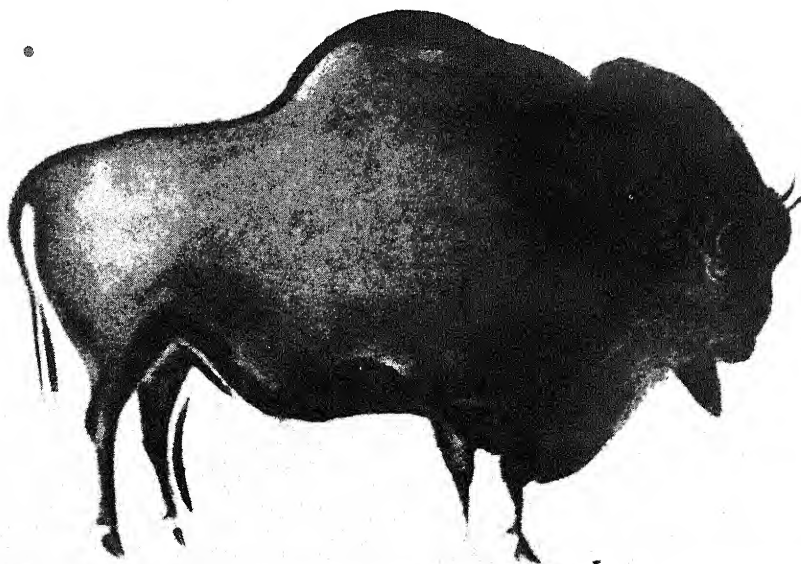


Photo by American Museum of Natural History

Thousands of years ago a cave man of the Old Stone Age painted this bison in the depths of a dark cave in Southern France. He had had no training as an artist, but he had seen the works his cave-man ancestors had left there before him, and best of all, he knew animals as only a man whose life depended upon them could. He had seen them start and run or lower their horns and charge as he attacked them; or, coming

upon them unawares, he had seen them grazing peacefully. He knew where rolls of fat or strong muscles swelled their thick hides. He had followed for many weary miles the imprint made by slender or massive hoofs of deer or elephant. He had listened for the soft, terrifying tread of padded feet of lion or bear. And he could paint all these creatures on a wall as clearly as they were engraved on his memory.

## MAN'S FIRST PICTURES

### *How a Little Girl Discovered the Oldest Paintings in the World*

**I**N SPAIN not so very long ago a little girl was clambering about a cave with her father. The light he carried made queer long shadows as he bent over the floor, looking for chipped pieces of stone which he said were old, old hatchets. They had worked their way well back underground and the ceiling was getting lower and lower over their heads. It was rather uncomfortable work, and the little girl was probably somewhat bored. Anyway, she stopped looking at the floor and fell to watching the light flicker along the walls and ceiling, brightening first one spot and then another. All of a sudden she jumped. "Bulls, father, bulls," she cried, and made her father jump too, for

any kind of bull was an odd enough thing to find in a cave. These were only pictures that she saw, but they turned out to be a very surprising discovery. They are, in fact, some sixteen thousand years old, and it is quite possible that no one else had looked at them in all the long time since the men who drew them ceased living in the cave.

Anyway, no one had done any drawing there since. So it was many thousand years ago that someone in that cave—someone, perhaps, who was rather bored, like the little girl—had drawn those lifelike animals. It was very cold outside, so cold that no one went out at all except to hunt for food. There was nothing much to do except to sit

## THE HISTORY OF ART

around; and so this bored person fell to scratching idly with a sharp stone. The marks amused him and he tried experiments. He made the outline of a bison he had been hunting; he scratched a few lines for the eyes and mouth and the bushy hair on the neck. It looked very lifelike, even though so carelessly done. It was worth making into a really good picture. So he got his palette of reindeer horn and his brush of animal hair and mixed some paint to draw a strong black line around his bison. Then he filled in the shading with red and brown or yellow. The result was so fine that his friends in the cave decided to draw too. And they all set to work, making bison and boar and reindeer gallop all over that ceiling.

Sixteen thousand years is a long time for any information to come down to us about the people who did these drawings; but scientists all over the world have pieced together bits of information they have found by digging in the ground, until they have been able to form some notion of what life was like in those old days. To begin with, the climate was very different from what it now is. Several times Europe and America have been covered with ice and snow that came down from the north. The great hairy mammoth and the swift and hardy reindeer lived in those cold times. Between these cold periods were ages when

it was warm and balmy and great jungles grew up where the elephant and hippopotamus roamed. Of course these changes came about very slowly, going on through so many thousands of years that no one at the time ever lived long enough to notice them at all. These thousands of years of change are usu-

ally all lumped together under the title of Old Stone Age, because the making of stone weapons was one of the things man learned at that time. That alone probably took him several thousand years.

Those are the earliest days that we know about; it was the time when man was just beginning to think. He did not find out many things in all that time, but what he did find out was important. Somehow he learned how to use fire to keep himself warm and to cook with, and he learned how to chip a stone

into a sharp hatchet to kill animals for food—and he or his women folk learned to sew. That seems unimportant until one remembers that when ice and snow were over the land warm clothes would be badly needed. The sewing together of the skins of animals must have marked a long step in advance.

If we look carefully at the cave of Altamira (äl'tā-mē'rā), where the little girl made her discovery, we shall find out two important things about these early people. First of all, we know they could draw because here is the evidence. And then it is safe to guess

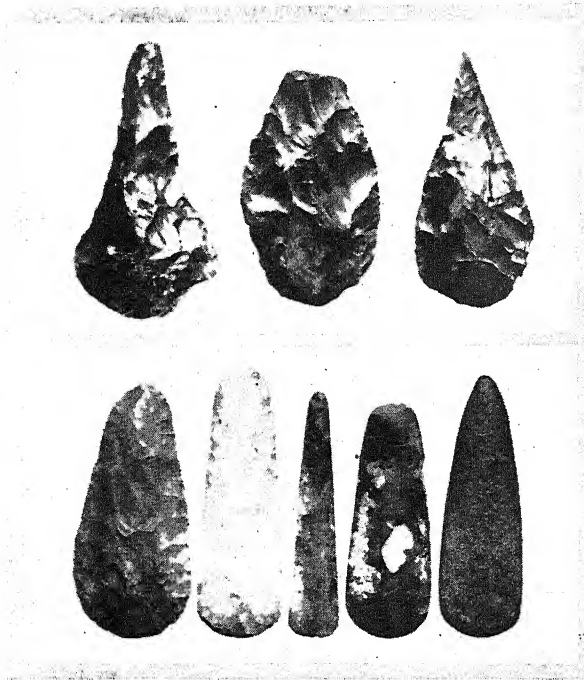
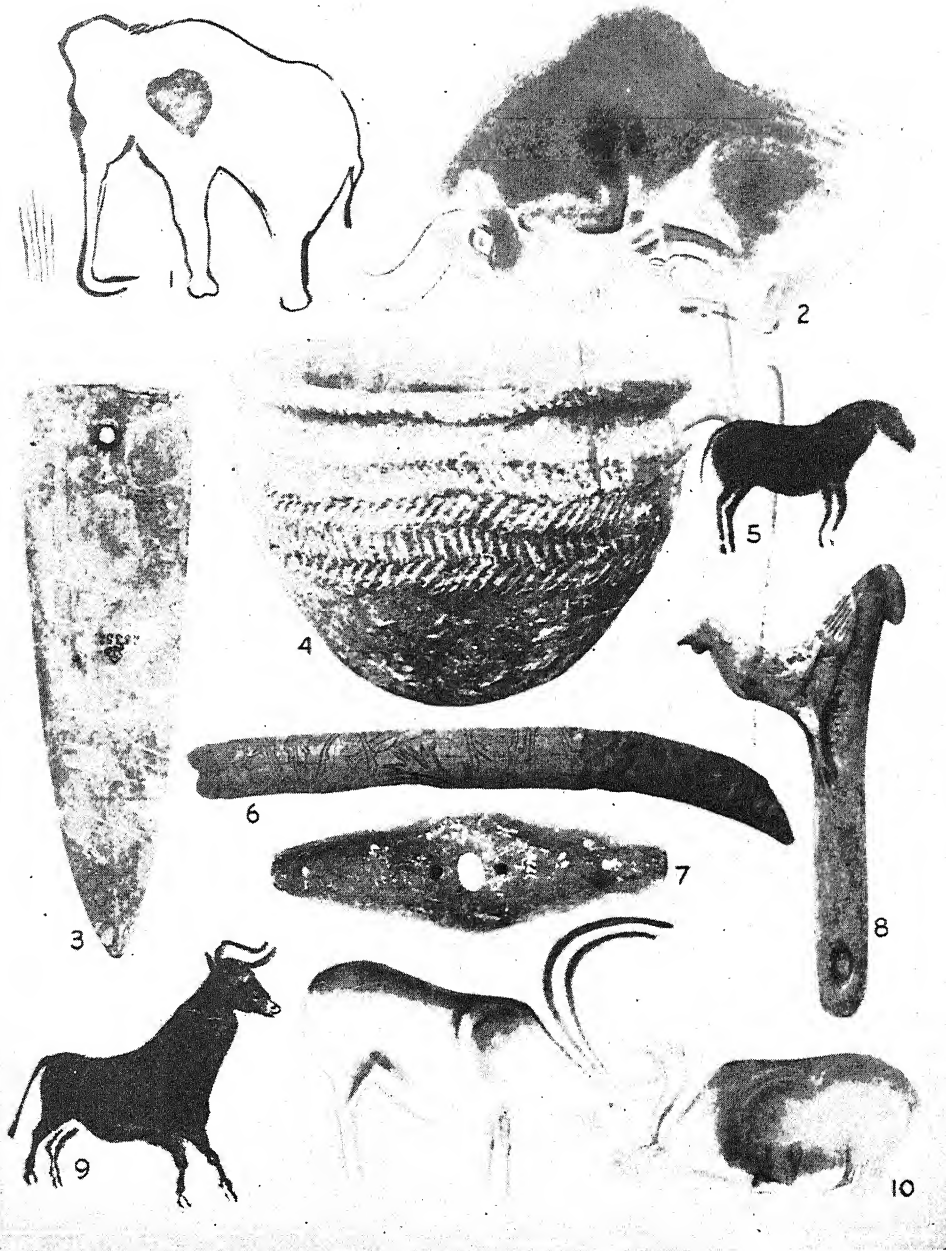


Photo by British Museum

Artist though he was, our cave man had no better weapons or tools than the ones you see in the upper part of this picture. As the Reindeer Age passed, the clever cave artist passed with it. The climate settled down to very much what it is to-day, and we find another people who lived more as we do. Although they could find no better material for their implements than stone, they learned to polish and grind their axes instead of merely chipping them. We call them the people of the New Stone Age; they fashioned the stones you see in the lower part of this picture.

## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by American Museum of Natural History and British Museum

Paintings and carvings of the cave man: 1, early outline of elephant; 2, crouching bison; 5, horse; 6, reindeer and fish carved on ivory; 8, ivory bird; 9, ox; 10, two reindeer. Works of the New Stone Age: 3 and 7, well-polished stone implements; 4, clay bowl. The people of the New Stone Age learned to build themselves houses set upon stilts above the shallow water on the edge of a lake. There they were pro-

tected from wild animals. They learned to sow seeds and grow grain and to tame animals for their own use. They were not artistic as the cave men had been, but they had learned how to make pottery which, centuries later, other peoples were to turn into something very beautiful. Their own pots and jars, however, were very crude, with simple designs, such as zigzags and spirals, scratched or painted on them.

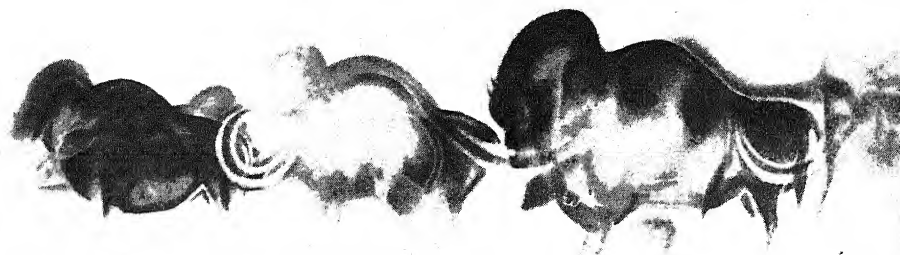


Photo by American Museum of Natural History

These handsome animals are mammoths, bison, reindeer, and horses, from a cavern in France. However well the cave man could draw and model, he never learned to compose a picture, that is, to group his ani-

from what they drew that they were hunters. It probably would not have occurred to them to paint these particular animals unless they were used to thinking about them a good deal, and only a hunter whose dinner depended upon his quick eye would have noticed what these artists noticed. They could not have had any models before them; one could scarcely get a live bison or reindeer into a cave only four feet high! Yet they remembered how a reindeer lay down—in what order he lifted his feet when he ran, and where the great swelling muscles came in a bison's neck and legs. They must even have admired these animals as they hunted. They have made a sort of design of the bison lying down, and have drawn the lovely curve of a reindeer's antlers as if they found them beautiful.

Old as these pictures are, they are probably not the first that were drawn. These people are too clever to be beginners. So far as we know, these drawings were done in the fourth glacial period, called the Reindeer Age. Sometime in all the ages before, man had started scratching. Perhaps the elephant which is just a bare outline with only two legs is one of the earliest attempts. Somehow in a moment of boredom man had hit upon drawing as an amusement, and after

mals in a balanced design. And he seems to have had no respect for the work of earlier artists. His animals are scattered helter-skelter over walls and ceilings—often painted right on top of earlier paintings.

that he drew whenever he could. Sometimes he made such animals as you see—sometimes he just put his hand up against the wall and colored around it. There is a cave all full of such hands in Castilla in Spain. Occasionally he tried human beings, but they were harder to do. Man's first drawings must always have been from memory and there is a great deal to remember about how a man is put together. The cave painters never did succeed very well. They could not get the outlines right—though it is true that one fellow in a cave in Spain managed to make funny little figures that jump and lunge at each other most amazingly, even if they are hardly more than animated straight lines.

The habit of making pictures men carried into carving, too. The tools they used were shaped into horses' heads or carved with reindeer. Some scientists believe that these simple early people came to regard their pictures as a sort of magic—that to draw a bison and make a mark over the heart at the point where the weapon should hit would somehow make a hunter throw more surely at a real bison's heart when he met it by the river. Whether or not this belief made good hunters, we cannot tell; but at least it made good artists.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 2

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### THE BIRTH OF FINE ART IN OLD EGYPT

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- Was there any art before the rise of Egypt? 11-7  
What the use of bronze meant, 11-8  
The fact that the dead were held sacred affected all Egyptian art, 11-10  
How art was made "to last forever," 11-12  
Which of the dynasties were famous for this art? 11-16  
How an entire city was dedicated to the Sun God, 11-16  
What the rule of the priests meant, 11-14  
What Egypt is like to-day, 11-20

#### *Things to Think About*

- Why are not pyramids built to-day?  
Why did the Egyptians work with great care?  
Why did their art go unchanged for thousands of years?  
Is art used for the same purpose to-day as it was at the time of the pharaohs? What is the difference?

#### *Picture Hunt*

- What were the principal animals drawn and sculptured by the Egyptians? 11-12, 15, 19  
How did they make their sculpture seem almost alive? 11-10, 18  
What kind of figures and utensils were placed in the tombs? 11-11, 12, 13  
Were the tombs designed to be pleasant or unpleasant places? 11-6

#### *Related Material*

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#### *Leisure-time Activities*

- Make a model of an Egyptian sailing boat, 11-13  
Egyptians revealed their daily life on the walls of their tombs.  
Draw a group of pictures showing your own daily activities.  
Visit a museum if you can, and study the sculpture, pottery, jewelry, and models of Egyptian tombs that you will find there.

#### *Summary Statement*

- No civilization has ever left quite so lasting and complete a record of its daily life and aspirations as has that of the ancient Egyptians.

(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)



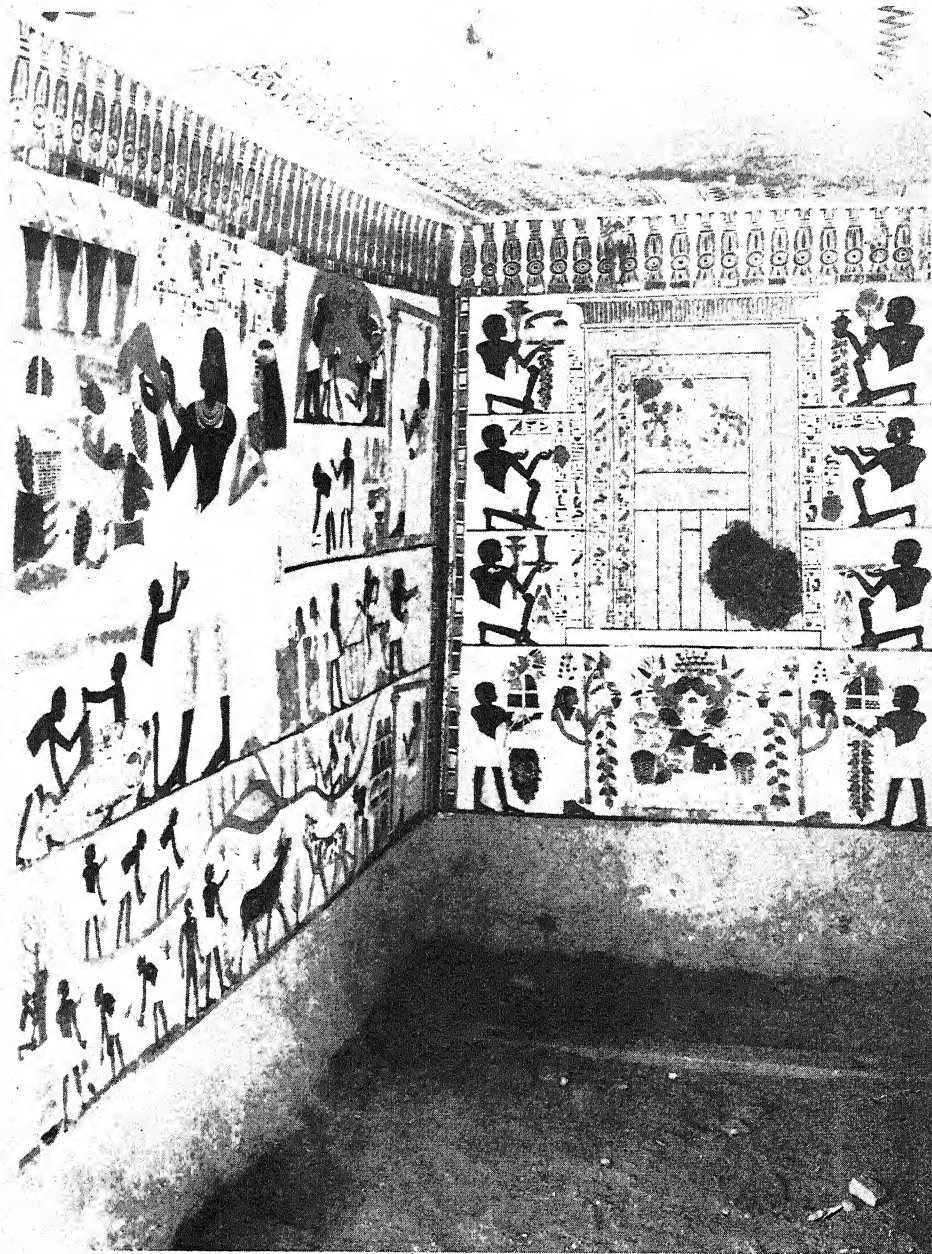


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

The tiny tomb of the townsman Nakht is crowded with paintings meant to keep him happy and occupied in after life. To the left are figures of Nakht and his wife. His skin is dark and hers is light—a convention which the Egyptians invented and passed on to Crete and Greece. Behind him, workers gather blue grapes and trample them in wine vats, while holding to straps to keep themselves from slipping. Below him servants

till the muddy brown soil, sinking to their ankles in the soft earth. Others, armed with hoes and axes, sow the grain and cut down mimosa trees. Many-colored birds, some with rainbow-tinted feathers, are trapped in large nets. Red and white and brown spotted cattle appear here and there. Even Nakht's pet cat is shown, happily enjoying a fish. On one wall an old blind harper plays at the banquet for the dead.



Photo by Ollivier, Paris

In the rich valley of the Nile there grew up an art so splendid that thousands of years have not dimmed it. Time has plucked many a huge stone block from the pyramids, but their majesty remains untouched by the

passing centuries. Vandals and earthquakes have done their best to destroy temples and tombs, but more than enough is left to tell us how these artistic people searched their souls to make beautiful things.

## *The BIRTH of FINE ART in OLD EGYPT*

*Here Is the Story of a Barbarian Boy Who Found His Way Down into Egypt Long Ago and Became an Artist There*

**T**HE first time that any man ever gave some little touch of beauty to something that he was making for his use, he started the first bit of art in the world. He made something that was meant to be good to look at as well as good to use. Just when this happened we do not know, of course, and the name of the first artist is forever lost. But it must have happened very long ago. Even as far back as the Stone Age some of the men in Europe had already come to be such good artists that they painted the walls of their caves with pictures which we still admire to this day. We have told about their pictures in a former story in these pages. Now we are going on to tell about how art grew and spread in the

world many years later, after history began in Egypt.

We ought to say that for some time most of the world did not do any better than the artists in the Stone Age. In fact, some of the people in the world have never yet gone beyond those artists. To this day some of the natives in Australia are still using stone weapons, and are not even so civilized as the Swiss lake dwellers of thousands of years ago. But certain of the other peoples had taken the next steps forward in art at least six thousand years ago. Among these peoples the Egyptians were the leaders.

Now the one best way to find out about Egyptian art, if only it were possible, would be to go back for a visit to Egypt about 1,400

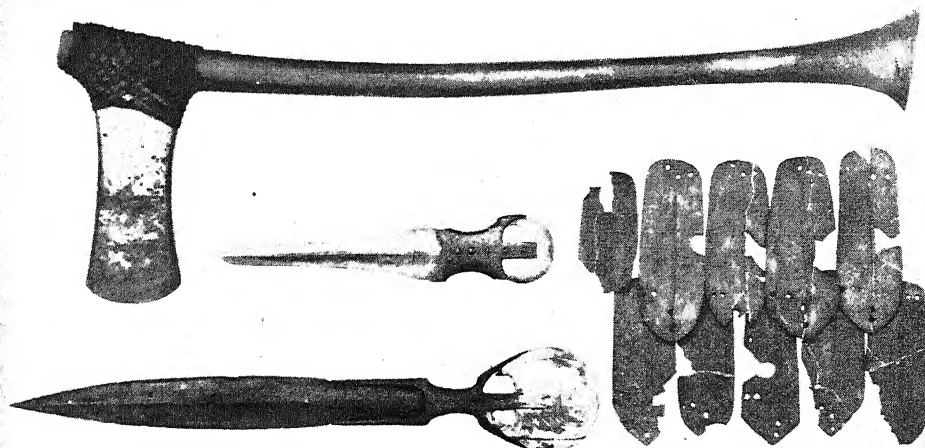


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

Here you see part of the war harness of an Egyptian of the Old Kingdom. At the top is a battle-axe.

Below it are two daggers and a fragment of the scale armor which protected the warrior's body.

years before the time of Christ and look at all the treasures of art in the land. Of course we cannot do that. But luckily we can come very near to doing it. Let us imagine that there was a boy from far up in barbarous Europe who *did* go down to Egypt, following some Egyptian travelers to his distant land, and who became an artist there; and let us imagine that we have found out the whole story of this boy. So we are now going to Egypt with the boy, and see what he saw.

#### First among the Artists

It was in the Mediterranean hills that this boy had the great luck to come face to face with the great Egyptian general who had traveled into his far land. The boy must have thought the Egyptian very wonderful, in his fine linen and with his great necklace of blue, green, and gold. But of all the wonderful things about the man, perhaps the most marvelous to the boy who had never seen any tool better than a stone hatchet, was the long bronze sword that the Egyptian carried.

This sword was one of the main things that made all the difference between the shining Egyptian and the Stone Age boy. It was a metal sword, and knowing how to use metal makes all sorts of things possible

that are not possible with stone. The sword itself might be used only for killing, but other metal knives and tools would be good for many other purposes.

It is the other things that one can cut with a bronze knife that are so important. One can cut blocks of stone to make great buildings; one can hew wood to make a mighty ship. In fact, one can carve wood and stone into any shape at all—into statues and vases, for instance. In other words, there is far more that one can do in the arts. The Egyptians found out the use of metal very early, and we put them first among the artists because they used their knowledge so well.

#### A Visit to Ancient Egypt

The boy had plenty of chance to think of these things as he sailed away with his new friend. He could not explain why he had come along, because he could neither speak nor understand the Egyptian language. But the man had given him one of the bronze swords, and after that his mind was made up. He stole away at night and swam out to the ship on which the stranger and his followers had come.

The trip back to Egypt was a fairly long one, and very thrilling for the boy who had never been on a great ship before. The men



## THE HISTORY OF ART

gave him the name of Nept in their own language, and by the time they were nearing home Nept was beginning to understand a little of what they said. He learned that his friend Haremhab (hä-rēm'häb) was a great lord in his own land and general of the armies.

Then one day they came to the flat delta at the mouth of the Nile, and next morning Nept woke up to see three "mountains," all smooth and sharp and pink in the sun's first rays. Around them a mass of small buildings, half hidden by palm trees, seemed to float on the water. Nept and his new friend took a small boat and were rowed over toward the three dazzling mountains, which Haremhab called "pyramids" (pīr'a-mīd).

The bright sun was reflected so fiercely from their polished sides that Nept could hardly bear to keep his eyes on them. They shone like mirrors.

The boat landed Nept and Haremhab before a great stone temple that stood in a pleasant grove of palm trees. They entered the door and passed through a cool, dark vestibule into the most wonderful place that Nept had ever seen. Oil lamps burning here and there gave a dim soft light; the whole hall—walls, ceiling, and floor—glowed with a wonderful deep pink color. Everything was pink granite, polished till it shone like a mirror. Even the floor reflected every image

like a pool of water. As the boy walked along, he could watch the dim shadows of his feet moving up and down in its surface.

Many great square pillars ran down the length of the hall. Farther on Nept could

see lights flickering before some great figures seated against the wall. He found his hand resting on the pedestal of one of these figures, and looked up to see the statue gazing down at him just as if it were about to speak to him. The features had been modeled with marvelous skill, and had been painted to look like a living person. In fact, the figure looked so real and stately as it sat at ease on its throne that Nept almost felt he should bow low and salute it. He

was sure this person must be the king about whom he had heard Haremhab speak. He noticed that the others had

moved off toward the end of the hall with offerings in their hands. Somehow he knew it would not do to scuttle across that shining floor to join them; so instead, he walked slowly around the kingly statue. At the side he found that a bird was embracing the king's head with its wings, and that a lotus flower had been carved and painted on the throne.

When the general returned Nept asked who this might be. The answer was, "The great king Khafre," and Nept was satisfied. This was indeed a king.

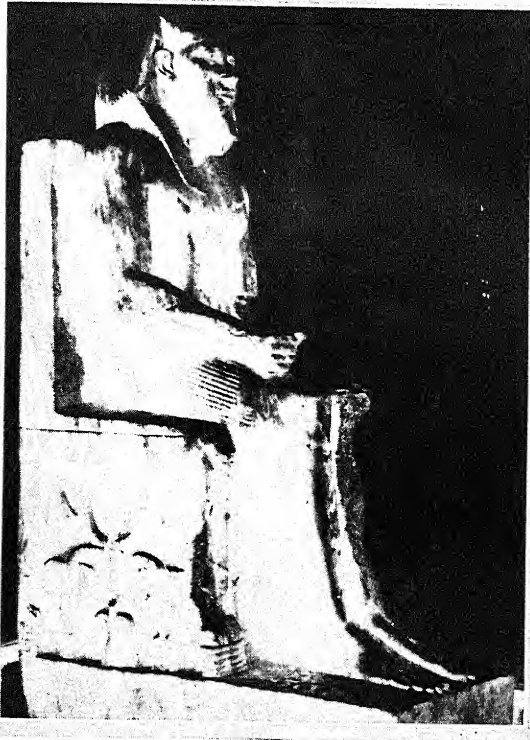


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

This stern, majestic figure is Khafre, a king who ruled in Egypt five thousand years ago. He built the second pyramid at Gizeh. All the strength and power of the art of the Old Kingdom has gone into this fine portrait carved out of hard stone. Even if we had no history books to tell us so, this statue would reveal the fact that the people of ancient Egypt thought of their king as more than king, and as more than human. He was a god, and, as such, must be given the calm power, dignity, and splendor of something divine.



Photo by Ollivier, Paris

These are the great pyramids of Khafre and Khufu. In front of them lies the mysterious sphinx, whose

battered head was once the portrait of a pharaoh—perhaps, as some think, of Khafre himself.

Out they went again and walked along a wall connecting the temple with one of the

pyramids. In front of two enormous stone paws spread out in the sand, they stopped. Nept's eye traveled back along the two great legs and up and up until his neck would not bend back any further. Then he saw that a mighty human head was looming over him, far up in the air. The painted face was of such a giant size that Nept ran out from under it. A long, crouching animal body sprawled back along the sand. Of course Nept thought this would be a glorious thing to climb. He could get a foothold on the giant paws. He had just put one knee between the toes and reached his hands over

innocent trifling with the sacred object.

Nept followed with a sigh down one of the aisles of mastabas (mäs'tà-bà), or stone tombs. Entering the door of a very large and imposing one, he found himself in a room much smaller than the king's hall, but very gay, with many pictures on the walls—pictures of people busy at all sorts of things. There were paintings of men harvesting grain in the fields, of men driving cattle, of geese feeding, and of tall storks with their feet in the water. In one spot some sailors were having just such a quarrel as Nept had once had himself. He laughed as he remembered jerking up an oar and striking out with it just as one of these fellows was doing. He even found a picture



Photo by British Museum

The Egyptian love for vivid color is clearly shown in the statue of Princess Nofert, a royal lady of nearly five thousand years ago. Her skin is yellow, her hair is a blue-black, and her collar and the band around her hair are touched with vivid splashes of red, green, blue, white, and black. Balls of crystal set into white eyeballs and capped with metal lids make her eyes almost alive.

the curve of the foot when a hand fell on his shoulder and pulled him away. His companion was shocked at the boy's

that might have been one of himself driving the cows home to be milked, back in his own land. It was all so brightly

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painted and so real that Nept could not stop staring. Never, never had he imagined that there could be such things in the world as he was seeing this day.

Suddenly he was startled to see that there were some strange people in the room. They were sitting in a sort of niche—a man and a woman side by side—and they gazed out eagerly at the painted pictures he had been admiring. But they were very still, so still that Nept was forced to decide that they too must be only statues. Yet the color on their faces was very life-like, and their eyes even had bright stones set in them to make them look real; their clothes and jewelry were just like the clothes and jewelry of living persons. "They must be the lord and lady of the place," thought Nept. He turned to the general and asked, "Is this their house?"

"Yes," said the general.

"And where are they?"

"They are dead," came the answer. "Dead a thousand years or more."

"Dead!" echoed Nept. "And is the great king dead, too?"

Again the general nodded. "But there is another king now," he added. "You shall see him, but he does not live here."

Nept was a bright boy, and as he learned more of his new language he began to understand many strange things about this great land and its marvelous art.

Haremhab was reviewing army maneuvers in the neighborhood. He said with a sigh that the King took more interest in art than government, and that the soldiers had little to do these days. So he often had time to take Nept across the river, where they would sit and look at the three mighty pyramids

while he told the boy stories of the people who had built them.

It seemed that these vast buildings were tombs, though the Egyptians thought of them more as pleasant houses where they

could live forever. To them death meant only going on living somewhere else; and so the dead person's friends were very careful to arrange everything so that he would be comfortable and happy in the other life. They learned to preserve his body with spices and wrap it in linen bandages in order that it might always remain to house his spirit. Then for fear that something might happen to the body—and in order that the god of the dead might be quite sure to whom he was talking when he judged the soul—they had portrait statues made to look exactly like the people themselves.

Nept wanted to know how they remembered exactly what a person looked like after he was dead.

"Ah," said Haremhab, "the statues are made long before, while he is still living. That is one of the important things you do as you get older. You have your statue made just as you want it. Mine is newly finished. You shall see it when we go up to the city. And my tomb is ready as well. The great king himself had it made for me, and he consented to have himself pictured on the walls. There are pictures of all my doings as general of the army and lord of my estates. They stand for all the things I wish to have with me in the afterlife. We expect to go on doing just what we do here."

It sounded to Nept like a pleasant, friendly

Several portraits of Egyptian scribes—whose duty it was to write out business documents and treasury records—have come down to us from the Old Kingdom. One of them is shown at the left.



Statues of the people of Egypt were more or less regulated by the worldly station of the persons shown. The artist could make the statue of a middle-class person much more intimate and personal than he could have made the statue of a pharaoh. People were often shown in groups. The wife might be seated beside her husband, with her arm around him, as is shown above; or—since after all she was not the head of the household—she might be standing beside him, a very tiny figure as compared with her seated lord. The lowest statue is the portrait of a shipbuilder of about 3000 B.C. The center picture shows a priest and his wife; they lived in about 2800 B.C.



Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art and British Museum

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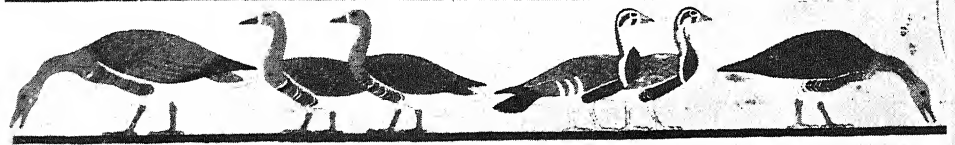


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

The artist who painted these geese has caught the sedate and amusing walk of the foolish birds, and the graceful curves they make as they crane their necks to feed. The green, blue, and brown of their plumage

stands out against a background of gray. This composition, which comes from a tomb five thousand years old, is one of the few paintings which have come down to us from the Old Kingdom of Egypt.

way to look at death. Haremhab showed him how all these pictures were made to last forever, so that the soul should never lack provisions. The statues that looked so lifelike were really made of the hardest stone or wood, and even the paintings on the walls were first carved, and then painted—so that they might not wear off.

"I think," said Nept suddenly, "that I should like to be an artist."

"This is certainly the time to be one," said Haremhab, smiling. "In the old days it was not so much fun. Then you had to do everything in precisely the same way, precisely as you were told. You see, these statues had to last forever, and with the least possible damage. It would be very sad for a soul to have to get along with a maimed and broken portrait. So the priests decided there were really only two ways that were safe and right in statues. In one way the statue is sitting, like Khafre, both feet together and the arms close to the sides. In the other way, it is standing with one foot forward. The sculptors often used very, very hard stone that took a great deal of chipping and polishing, first with iron and finally with stone instruments. That took great time and patience."

"Oh, but I should be a painter!" objected Nept.

"There too you would have found very hard and fast rules. In the old days paintings all had to be cut out in the rock first.

There were models for every kind of thing that you carved out, and you had to follow them very precisely. It was only in the face itself and in a few finishing touches that you could show your originality—and that part was always reserved for the master artist."

Haremhab pointed to one of the reliefs.

"It is rather complicated, you see. The face is carved in profile, with the shoulders facing forward; and then the body twists again at the waist, so that the legs are in profile."

"True enough," agreed Nept. "It all looked so lifelike that I hadn't noticed. Why do they do it all that way?"

"Well, the priests said that these were to be memory pictures of the whole person—a sort of combination of front and side views. They said the statues were not meant just to look real, but to show the complete person. And of course the priests know best how we should bury our dead. So we have always done as they said—until now. Now the King has a new religion and a new art."

Nept wondered what you did if you

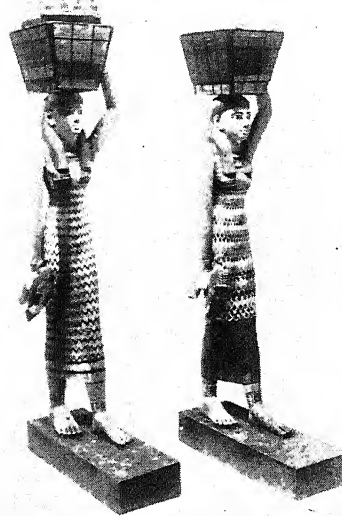
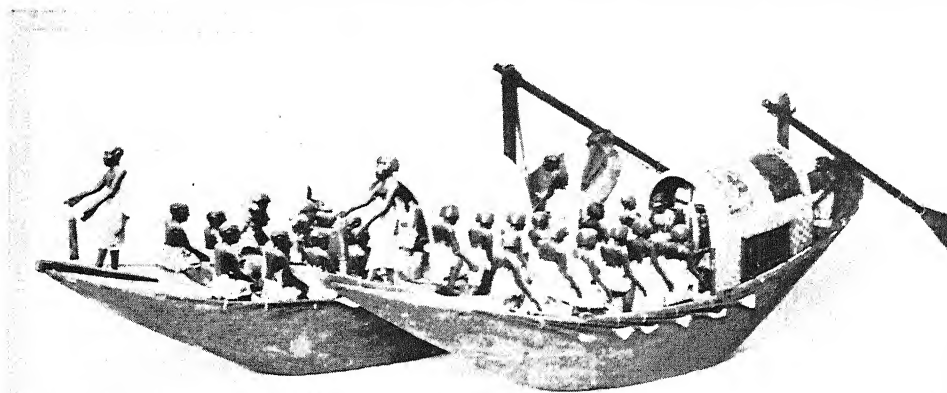


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

These Egyptian girls are carrying live ducks and baskets of wine and meat as offerings to the dead. They are models found in a Theban tomb of about 2000 B.C.



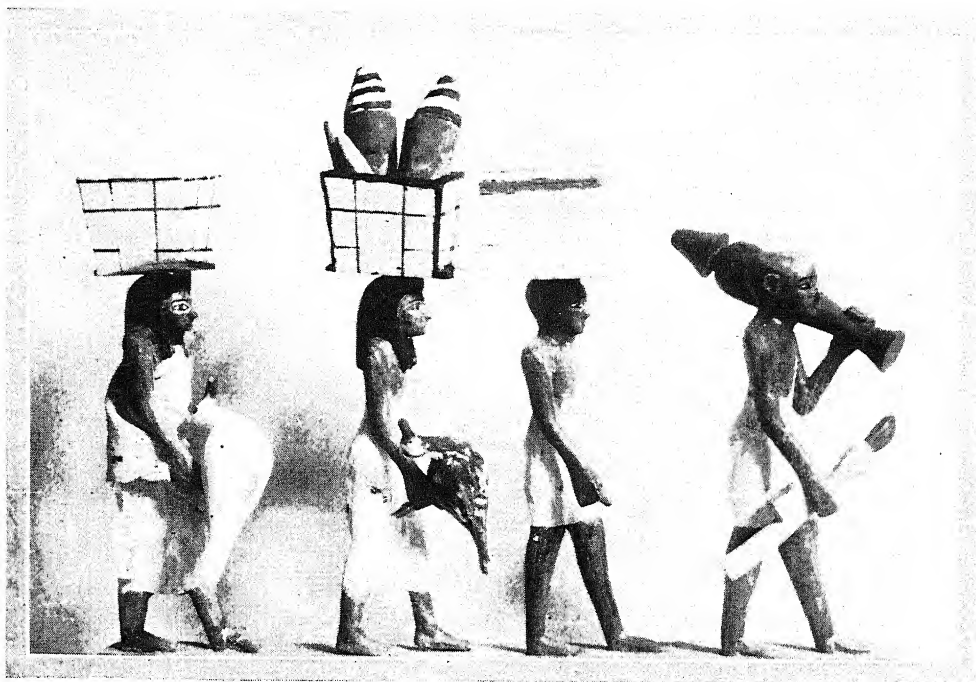
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Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art

Brightly painted and very lifelike little figures were put in Egyptian tombs to work for the dead man and keep him from starvation and a second death. Above

is a model of a funeral boat. Below is a group of servants bringing offerings to the dead. Both groups were found in tombs of about 2000 B.C.



were poor and could not have a great tomb.

"Then it is harder," said his friend. "Poor men must build of brick and must be satisfied with statues of wood. Instead of paintings, they buy little models of the things they wish to have with them. But of course their tombs are easier for thieves to break into."

The two walked over toward one of the poorer tombs and into the chapel. There

they found a gaping hole in the wall, and looked through into an empty tomb chamber beyond. Nept bent down to look at a beautiful model ship all rigged with sails—which the thieves had overlooked. Near it was a whole column of miniature soldiers, complete with swords and spears. For a moment Nept's fingers itched to pick them up; but then he thought of the poor soul with nothing

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else left to console it in the other world, and he drew back with a sigh.

"I wish I could make soldiers like that!"

"Perhaps you can," said Haremhab. "They say there is plenty of work for artists. I might get you into the King's workshop."

Our own Christian era is a little less than two thousand years old. We think of that as a very long time. We have certainly changed our ways a great deal in those twenty centuries. When we look at art we see that almost all the changes that fill the long books on its history have happened in this period. But Nept and Haremhab were looking back on fourteen hundred years of such slight change that the earliest works were almost exactly like the latest around them. People were still doing the same sort of statues and paintings in 1400 B.C. as they had done in 2800 B.C.; and if Haremhab and Nept could have looked forward another thousand years, they would have seen Egyptians still doing those same statues and paintings.

The set ways of making their memory pictures and their blocklike statues were exactly what the Egyptians wanted in their art, and so people were quite content without any change at all. They wanted things that would last forever, and surely they chose the best way of making

them. When you look at some of their things that did not have to last forever, jewelry and lamps and vases, you will find these as familiar and lovely as the best things we do to-day.

Yet as a matter of fact, the more you look at Egyptian art, the more you see that there were a few very little changes which mark the different periods of it.

The Old Kingdom, when the pyramids had been built and the statue of Khafre (kā'frē') carved, is perhaps the most friendly of all. The people were so eager to make a beautiful life for their dead that their statues really seem alive. In later years the carving may be more exquisite, but the faces do not seem so full of life.

After the days of the pyramid builders, the pharaohs—or kings—were not always so powerful, and they did not have so much money to spend in making large

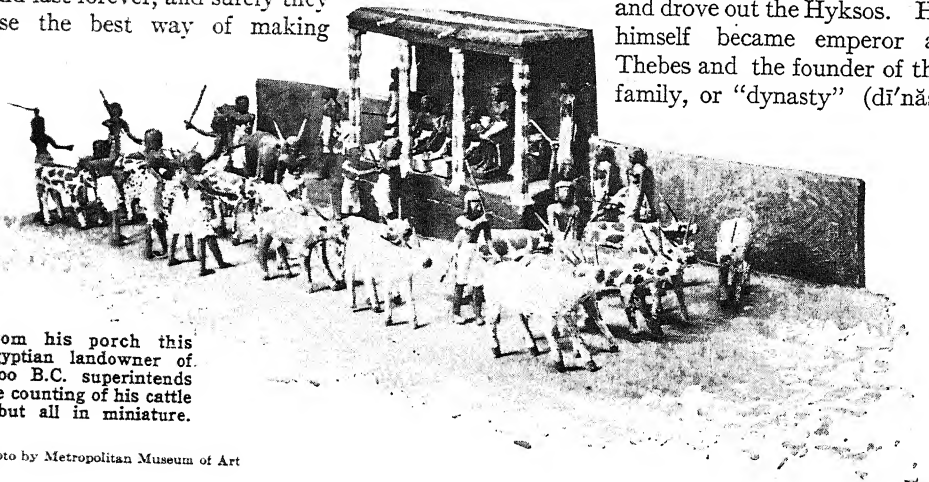
and grand things. Instead of that, they made their smaller things more finished and exquisite than ever.

Then came the rule of the foreign Hyksos (hīk'sōs), or Shepherd Kings, when there is almost no art at all.

But about 1600 B.C. a certain Thutmose (thōōt-mō'sē) rallied the people around him and drove out the Hyksos. He himself became emperor at Thebes and the founder of the family, or "dynasty" (dī'nās-



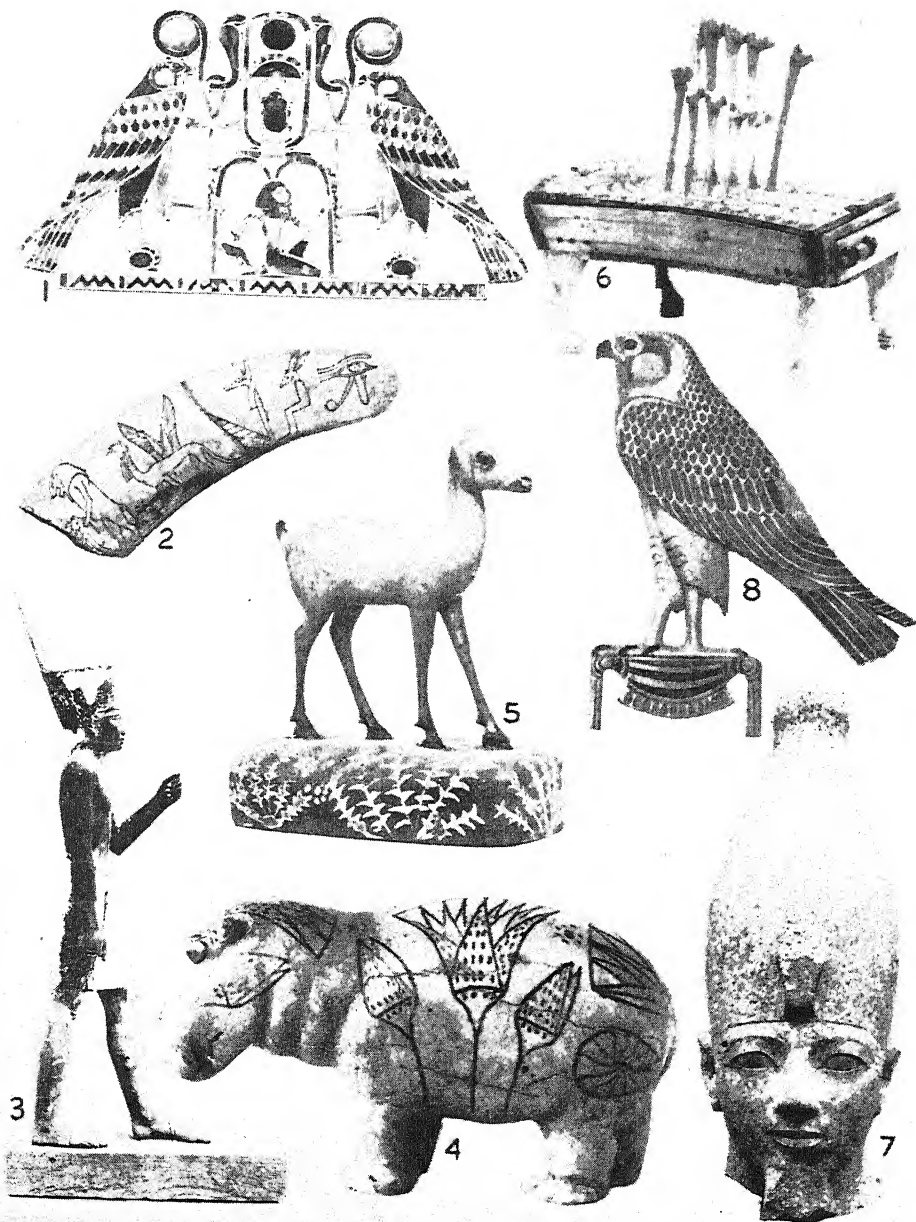
Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art  
This painted limestone statue of an Egyptian woman was made in about 2900 B.C.



From his porch this Egyptian landowner of 2000 B.C. superintends the counting of his cattle—but all in miniature.

Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

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Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art

All the things shown above were made in ancient Egypt. No. 1 is a piece of inlaid jewelry which gleamed on the breast of an Egyptian of about 1900 B.C. No. 2, a magic wand decorated with fanciful animals and signs. No. 3, statuette of a pharaoh. No. 4, a hippopotamus of bright blue faience. The artist, who lived nearly 4000 years ago, wanted to make the animal look real, so he painted upon its back the reeds and

flowers of the creature's swampy home along the lowlands of the Nile. No. 5, a gazelle carved out of ivory. The base he stands on is painted with plants from the desert, where he lived. No. 6, a game of ivory and ebony veneer, made nearly four thousand years ago. No. 7, a portrait of Queen Hatshepsut, the first great woman in history. You may read about her in the pages where we tell the story of Egypt.

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til, of emperors that we call the eighteenth dynasty in Egyptian history. If you go about looking at Egyptian things in museums, you find that many of the finest are marked "eighteenth dynasty." For Thutmose and his descendants founded the great and powerful empire which ruled from Lybia in Northern Africa to Mesopotamia just east of Asia Minor, and produced the fine flower of Egyptian art. They were a glorious family. You can see their portrait statues in museums to-day: Thutmose I, II, III, and IV; Hatshepsut (hät-shëp'sōōt), the beautiful queen who was a mighty builder and who appeared at court ceremonies dressed as a man to show that she represented the sun god quite as much as did any man king; and Amenhotep (ä'mën-hō'tëp) I, II, and III.

Right in the middle of their glory came the only real break in Egyptian art. One man did it—Amenhotep IV, who swept away all the old gods and proclaimed that there was only one god, Aton (ä'tön), the sun. This king closed all the temples of the other gods, until the glorious city of Thebes became a place full of silent buildings.

As a radiant morning was breaking in the year 1375 B.C., Amenhotep IV went out alone from Thebes in a small chariot of gold and silver drawn by two white Syrian mares. Until dusk he drove

madly over the sand all by himself, going down the river bank. At last he came to the spot where he felt he ought to build his new city. The boundary stone reads thus:

"East of the Nile, Aton, my father, in the place which thou has chosen, I shall raise up thy capital for thee . . . all the races of man shall come there to worship thee. There the house of Aton shall be in its illustrious glory to rejoice thy heart, Aton my father, and not far off I shall raise up my pharaoh's palace and the palace of the great royal wife. In the sides of the mountain I shall dig a tomb by the side of that of the great royal wife and my daughter Meritaton."

This new city was called Akhetaton (ä'kët-ä'tön), or "Horizon of Aton," and Amenhotep changed his own name to Ikhnaton (ik-nä'tön), or "Spirit of Aton." With his new name and his new city Ikhnaton broke completely with the old ways in art. It is strange to find this one restless soul in the midst of three thousand years of sameness. Or perhaps it is stranger to us, who love change, that there had not been others like him. If there were others they all failed. Ikhnaton was the only one who succeeded in carrying out his idea. Since the

sun whom he worshiped loved all living things, he proclaimed that all things in nature were beautiful and

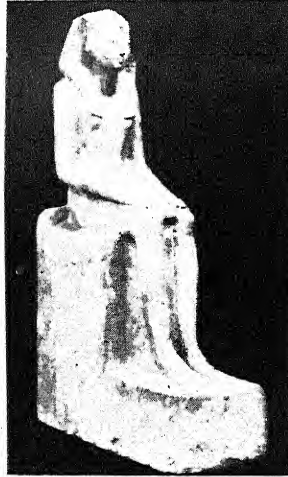


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

This is a portrait of Hatshepsut, Egypt's capable queen and the first woman to sit upon the throne of the pharaohs. It was placed in the beautiful temple she had built against the cliffs that face the Nile.

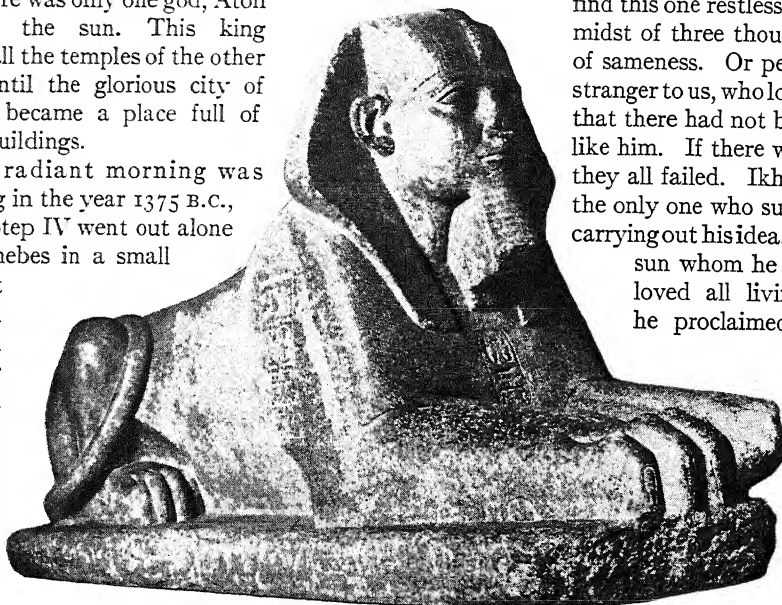
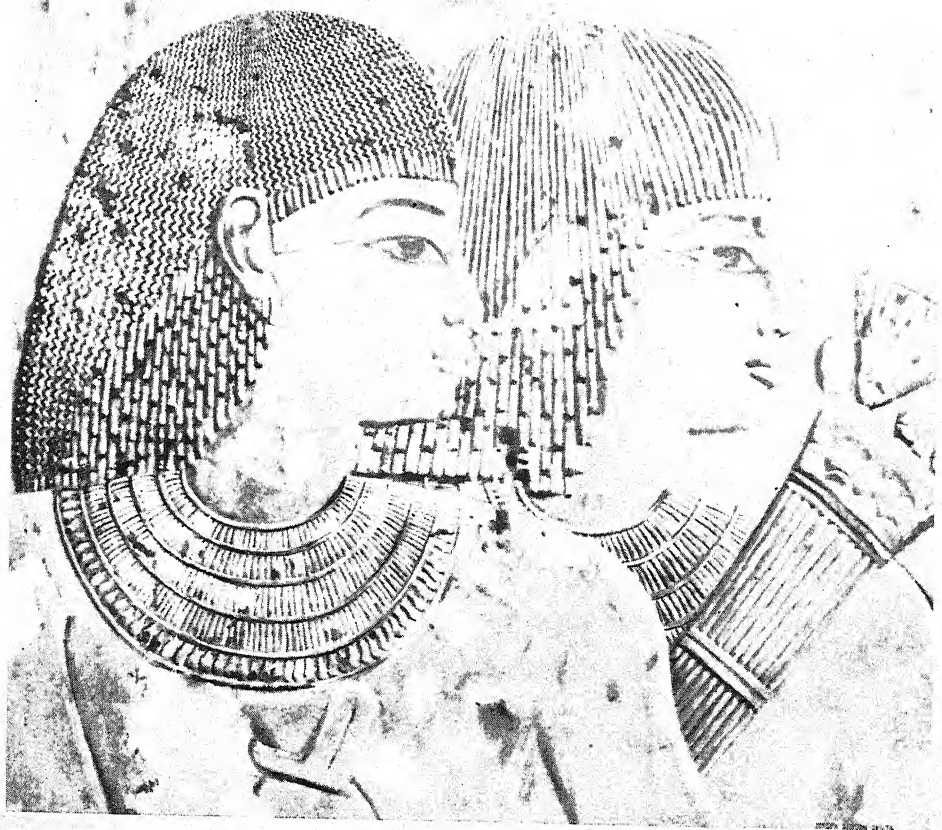


Photo by Alinari

A sphinx carved out of rose granite some 3,500 years ago.





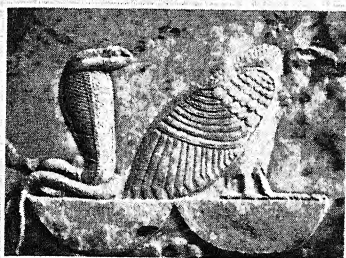
Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Egyptian reliefs, while very flat—almost paper-thin at times—are more lifelike than Egyptian paintings; for lights and shadows play about the modeled outlines of the figures, making them look more solid and real than the painted figures, which are nothing but out-

lines filled in with unshaded masses of color. In making a relief, the sculptor first drew his design upon the wall in red paint. Often he used a system of horizontal and vertical guiding lines to help him. Then he cut away the background.

precious. So his artists must forget the mere memory pictures of old, and instead must carve and paint things just as they looked. Nothing in nature was stiff and formal like the old art, and the new art must be as free as nature. He even made his life at court much freer and simpler than life had ever been there before, and he let his subjects look

Below is a carving in relief of two of the creatures that dwelt in the land of Egypt.



Nept landed in Egypt. It was this pharaoh that Haremhab had promised Nept he should see.

They went up the Nile by boat. The valley narrowed as they sailed south. Then as the sun declined toward its setting, they saw the valley broaden out on one side ahead of them, till it formed a great semicircle, and there they saw in the

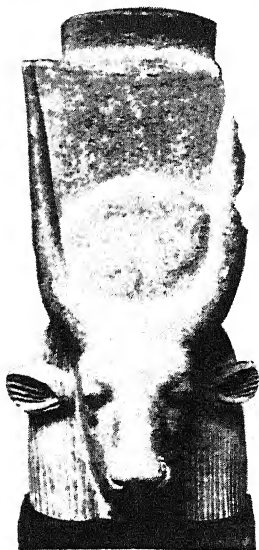
upon him as a man instead of as a god.

All this happened in 1375 B.C., and it was just a few years later that Haremhab and

distance what looked like the walls and towers of a city. It was Ikhnaton's beautiful city of Akhetaton.

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The next morning they stood in the courtyard of the palace. It was shaded by trees in which hundreds of bright birds twittered. Before them, on the high white wall of the palace, enormous figures had been carved and painted with brilliant glazes. Silver masts rose above, with red streamers upon



them, fluttering in the wind.

Haremhab was evidently well known at court, for everyone made way for him. He took Nept into the palace door at once. They went through whole forests of columns and many corridors, and finally stopped before a curtained door. Another moment and they stood inside—or were they outside again? No, there was a roof, though it seemed to be held up by the trunks of trees entwined with growing vines. In a moment Nept saw that these were carved and painted vines. All around the walls he saw painted trees and flowers, and under his feet were painted marsh grasses full of birds and animals. In the center of the room was painted a fish pond, with gay fish in it. These animals were by no means like the ones that Nept had seen painted elsewhere in stately rows. The birds here were flying in every direction, and a lamb and a kid were actually leaping up into the air.

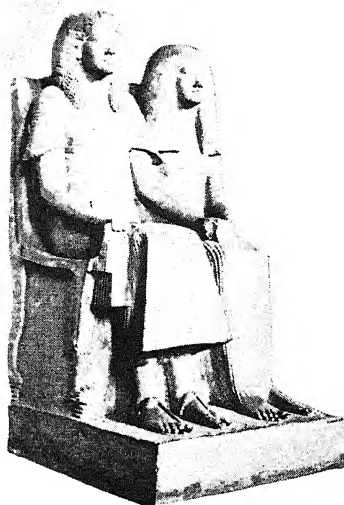
On the edge of the fish pond sat two beautiful little girls. After all his experiences Nept was almost ready to think these were painted, too; but suddenly they jumped up and ran to a man and a woman sitting at the end of the room.

The man looked up, and Nept saw two burning eyes in a thin face. The face lighted with a bright smile, and an arm was held out to greet Haremhab affectionately. Then as Nept looked upon the woman he forgot everything else. He had never seen anyone so beautiful and so gracious, and when she spoke her voice was low and very sweet. Somehow Nept knew that this was the queen and that the man was the king. She asked Haremhab of his travels, and seemed as much concerned as the King at his report of an



Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art and British Museum

At the top is the cow-headed goddess Hathor, whom the Egyptians were fond of carving in stone. The lowest picture shows portraits of an eighteenth-dynasty official and his wife. In the center is one of the most beautiful portraits the Egyptians ever made, a bust of Queen Nefertiti, who lived about 1400 B.C. Grace and elegance and truth to life are shown in this lovely head of painted limestone. Her crown is of blue and gold, her necklace is rich with color; her eyes of black and white stone are covered with rock crystal to make them clear and luminous.



uprising among the Hittites. A bearded, foreign-looking man was called, and they became engrossed in some clay tablets with odd marks on them, which the King spoke of as "letters from Mitanni." Nept and the little princesses were rather bored at that, and the youngest reached a small arm across the table for a lovely cup shaped like a lotus flower. Her hand slipped, and there was a clatter and a smash as the vase fell to the floor.

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The Queen looked severe. "I forbade you to touch—" she began.

Nept was on his knees.

"Oh, Your Majesty! Permit me—I could make you another. I have made pottery at home."

The Queen smiled. "That vase, my child, was a special treasure from the island of Crete. It would take a sure hand and eye to make another." She turned to Haremhab. "Who is the lad?"

"A boy I picked up on my trip, Your Majesty. He has his heart set on becoming an artist."

"Bravo! He shall replace our vase for us." Then she turned with a smile to her dismayed little daughter. "This is a lucky arrival for you. He has saved you a punishment. Come, children, we will send our new artist to the royal workshop."

Then began great days for Nept. He learned to carve and polish the hard stone that the Egyptians used.

First he fashioned it into vases and small bowls. Then gradually he was allowed to work on statues. The Egyptians used stones that we nowadays think are much too hard for carving—diorite (dī'ō-rīt) and strange speckled granite that makes some of the statues you see in museums to-day look as if they had a rash.

These were covered with stucco and then painted, like the beautiful bust of Nefertiti (něf'ēr-tē'tē), the queen, that Nept was allowed to work on. That was what he liked best to do.

This sculptured lion bears the name of King Tutankhamon, who lived about 3,300 years ago.

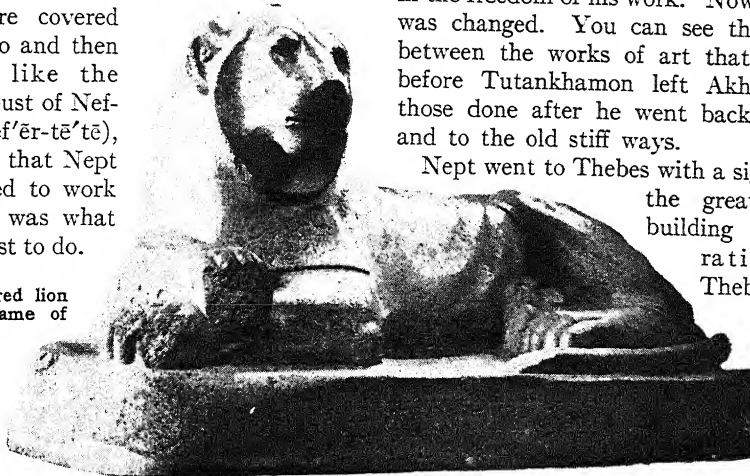


Photo by British Museum

He never tired of admiring the way in which the master artist had caught the proud pose of her head and the look in her great eyes, and he was willing to polish the stone for hours just to have a share in the work.

Gradually Nept came to be a master artist himself, and when the princess was married to Prince Tutankhamon (tōōt'āngk-ä'mūn) he made many of the beautiful things for their new palace.

Some of the treasures he made were later put into Tutankhamon's wonderful tomb—where we found them ourselves just a few years ago, when we discovered the tomb and opened it.

Later came sad days when the King died and the people lost their faith in the new religion. The young Tutankhamon became emperor. He had not the great vision of his father-in-law, and a day came when he left the beautiful city of gardens, just as Ikhnaton had left Thebes, and went back to the old capital

and the old gods. Haremhab and most of the other nobles were glad to go. The old ties at Thebes were very strong, and now that Ikhnaton was dead the people had forgotten the enthusiasm he had inspired. But Nept, who was a newcomer, had been very happy at Akhetaton, and especially so in the freedom of his work. Now everything was changed. You can see the difference between the works of art that were done before Tutankhamon left Akhetaton and those done after he went back to Thebes and to the old stiff ways.

Nept went to Thebes with a sigh, and saw the great work of building and restoration go on.

Thebes became more glorious than ever, and money was



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

This is a portrait of Thutmose III, a king of about 1500 B.C. It is modeled in relief in a block of limestone.

## THE HISTORY OF ART

spent lavishly on great works of art. But the style was set again in the old fashion; and for another thousand years, until the coming of the Greeks and Romans, art in Egypt followed its old course. It became wonderfully delicate and finished, but no longer spontaneous and personal. There were no more informal pictures like that of the Queen giving a rose to her royal husband. The King must sit again stiffly on his royal throne, or stand with one foot forward. Nept realized the majesty of the old art, but he missed the intimacy of the new. He decided to take ship to Crete, where Ikhнатon's artists had always been welcome among the artistic Cretans.

So he sat at the edge of the temple lake and said farewell to Egypt. Over in front of the great temple of Amon stood Hatshepsut's obelisks, with the inscription telling of the great labor of setting them up, and how rapidly it had been completed. And all this work had been done in order "that my name may remain forever in this temple," read the inscription.

"Forever!" Nept looked ahead and dreamed of the glory of Egypt to come.

You may go to Egypt to-day and find a little naked boy turning a water wheel to raise water to irrigate the fields, just as it was done in ancient days. As he turns, he sings an old, old song. And an old, old story is all that is left of the ancient Egyptians

themselves. The race is gone; their power is gone. But there are the pyramids and the temples at Thebes, and all the host of stone kings and nobles who people our museums. Five thousand years they have lived. It seems like a glimpse of Hatshepsut's *forever*. And beyond a doubt they will live on for many a century to come. For strange as the art of Egypt may look in many ways to us

to-day, it is nevertheless very beautiful, and has been a source of inspiration to countless artists since. Its influence has flowed in a steady stream down through the ages, and even now, in our pushing, tumultuous twentieth century, artists study the vigorous wall paintings that the Egyptians made, and try to reproduce the bright, calm beauty of many other Egyptian works of art. It is indeed like Hatshepsut's *forever*.



Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art

These are side and back views of a painted and gilded mask that once ornamented the head of a tightly-wrapped mummy. Masks of this kind, made of wood, plaster, or canvas, belong to the Egypt of Roman times. They were used by the Greeks and Romans who lived in Egypt and had learned to mummify their dead as the Egyptians did. Some preferred flat paintings to sculptured masks such as this one, and from them have come down to us a whole series of panel-portraits that are remarkably vivid and lifelike. They are portraits of Greek and Roman maids and matrons, youths and older men. Evidently most of these portraits were painted while the people were still alive, and they must have been hung about the house just as portraits are hung to-day. Then, when a person died, his portrait was taken down from the wall and fastened to the wrappings of his mummy. It must have been a little odd to see your portrait hanging on the wall and know that one day it would be fastened to your mummy!



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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 3

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### THE STRANGE ARTS OF BABYLON THE GREAT

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| How the Sumerians built colorful mountain temples of brick, 11-23-24 | How the warlike Assyrians made miles of alabaster reliefs, 11-27                 |
| How they used gold and enamel in their ornaments, 11-25              | A second Babylon arises: the splendor of its hanging gardens, 11-28              |
| The Semites invade Sumeria, 11-26                                    | Why the Persians loved bright colors, 11-28                                      |
| At the height of its power, Babylon falls to the Assyrians, 11-26    | How the art of the Mesopotamian valley has influenced later civilizations, 11-29 |

#### *Things to Think About*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Why does so little remain of Babylonian splendor? | Why have they been constantly fought over?   |
| Why were their palaces lined with colored tiles?  | Compare the gracious dignity of Egypt with the fierce splendor of Babylonia and Assyria. |
| Why has the Mesopotamian valley been so fertile?  |  |

#### *Picture Hunt*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| How did the Sumerians use their golden animal heads? 11-24        | the Assyrian sculptor shown that the cave man did not show? 11-26 |
| How has the artist indicated the triumph of King Naram-Sin? 11-22 | Did the Assyrians and Persians understand composition? 11-27-29   |
| In "The Dying Lioness" what has                                   |   |

#### *Related Material*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| History of the Sumerians, 5-75             | The story of the chosen people, 5-117-29 |
| History of Babylon and Assyria, 5-85       | Assyrio-Babylonian archaeology, 5-11     |
| The Chaldeans, the first astronomers, 5-95 | Persian rugs, 12-148                     |
| Babylonian architecture, 11-405            | Omar Khayyam's work, 13-89               |

#### *Summary Statement*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| The Babylonians, Assyrians, and Persians, living in splendor, produced a majestic art. They have taught us how to draw superb animals and landscapes in bright colors and to show them on tiles. |  |
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*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

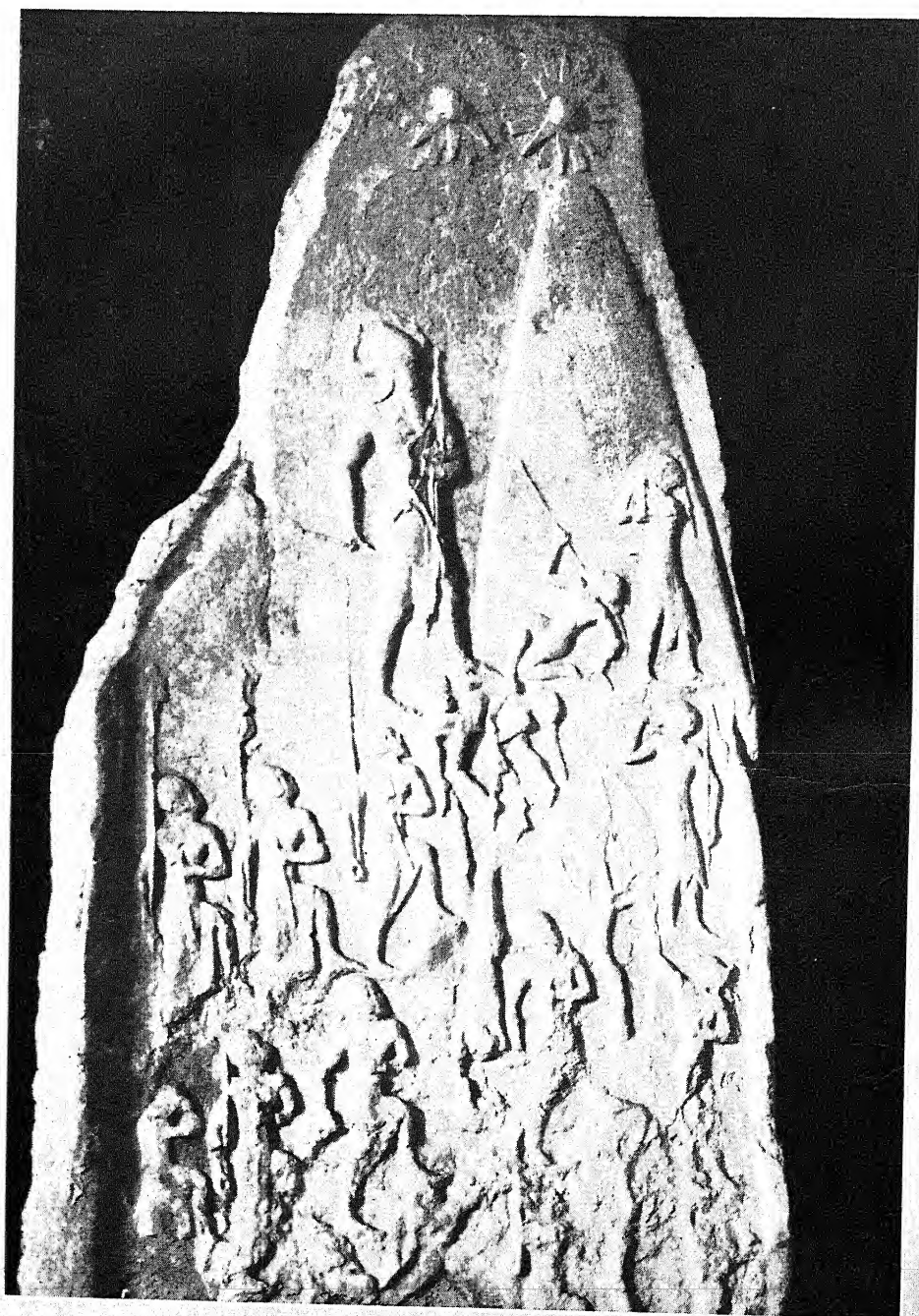


Photo by the Louvre

This is the stele of King Naram-Sin of Akkad. At the head of his army, the King climbs a mountain to receive the submission of his enemy, a people of the hills. The artist of this remarkable relief knew how

to group his figures into a pyramidal design to give a feeling of height; and with few figures cleverly arranged, he has been able to give the impression of large numbers of men who seem actually to be moving!

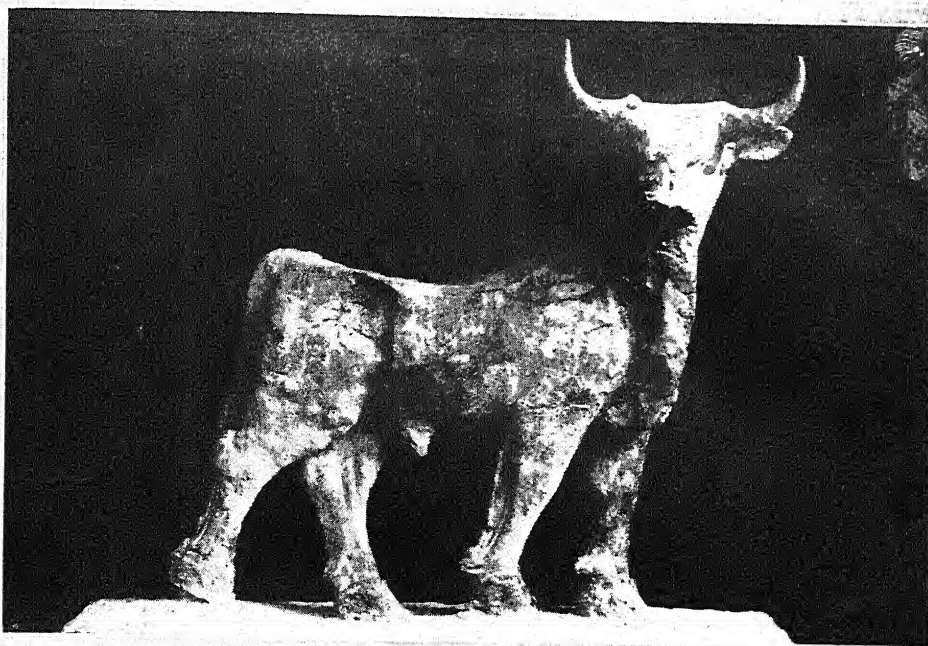


Photo by Pennsylvania University Museum

The Sumerians were amazingly skilled in the working of metals. Their weapons and utensils were so beautifully made that they are genuine works of art. But

most striking of all are the Sumerian sculptures of animals, in gold, silver, or copper. Above is a copper bull from al 'Ubaid, near ancient Ur.

## *The STRANGE ARTS of BABYLON the GREAT*

*This Is the Tale of What Was Done for the Sake of Beauty in the Cradle of Civilization between the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates*

**F**AR away to the east, in the storied lands beyond the Mediterranean, there stretches a smiling valley watered by two great rivers. There men have lived and died for so many centuries that no one can count the years; and there have happened so many great events that the famous valley with its peaceful rivers seems almost like a stage on which one can see the drama of our race unfold. For like the Nile, the Tigris and the Euphrates saw man's first blind gropings upward out of savagery. And like the Nile Valley, this valley which we call Mesopotamia (měs'ô-pô-tā'mĭ-ă) hides in its fertile soil some of the oldest relics of our race. Scholars have been busy, of late, digging for this treasure. They have turned

up the remains of a civilization as old as the one in Egypt. And many of the things they find are very beautiful.

When the curtain of history first rises on the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, we find it occupied by a stirring race of men called the Sumerians (sŭ-mĕ'rĭ-ăn). But even those early people were immigrants from somewhere else! Where they had come from, no one knows, but we think it must have been from a land of mountains, for they were called "mountain men," and when we find them they were still homesick, on their level plains, for the hills and valleys that their ancestors had known. So they built themselves mountains out of brick—not pyramids, such as the Egyptians built, but temple

towers rising from the valley in four broad steps. On top of each brick mountain stood a shrine in which the god was worshiped; in fact, it was his home.

Now Sumeria never became a single great empire, as Egypt did. It was a land of city-states. Each city was a little kingdom by itself, though sometimes one would get control of all the rest.

The city of Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, at one time had the upper hand in the great days of Sumeria, some 2,300 years before the birth of Christ. There the great temple mound, or ziggurat (zig'ū-rāt), as it was called, was two miles and a half around. A mountain, indeed! You may read all about it in our story of architecture.

Its lowest terrace was white; the one above it, black; and the top-most one was red. The temple shrine, on top of them all, was made of blue glazed bricks and had a golden dome, so that the ziggurat must have been a very gay and beautiful mountain. Up the long flights of stairs that led from the ground to the summit would go processions of priests, harpers with beautiful harps all carved and inlaid with bright stones, court ladies in gay red dresses and golden headdresses, and the king himself in his royal robes—wearing, perhaps, a helmet that was all of beaten gold.

## How Sumerians Were Buried

The Sumerians did not care so much about their tombs as the Egyptians did. And more than that, they had no stone in their valley with which to build. Any piece of stone they might use had to be carried all the way from the mountains near the coast. So they used stone very rarely—for kingly statues and carvings, and not for making tombs.

But they did bury their kings and queens

with some of the beautiful possessions that the monarchs had loved in life. In one royal grave was found a wonderful dagger with a blade of gold and a hilt of the bright blue stone we know as lapis lazuli (lā'pīs lāz'ū-lī). And it was in a tomb that we found a fascinating little silver goat that people must have loved to finger five thousand years ago. They admired him so much that we find

To the left is one of the fascinating animal heads which the Sumerians made of gleaming metal to ornament their harps. Below is an ostrich egg which a craftsman of Sumeria has skillfully inlaid with shell.

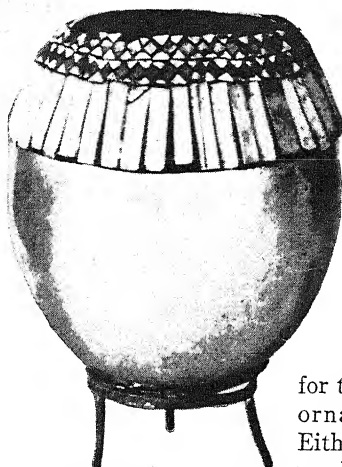
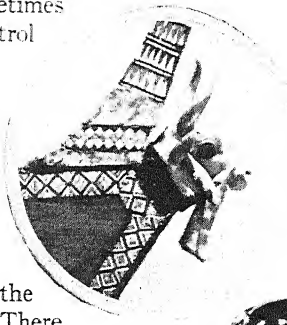
copies of him made by other artists in the country round about. He even was copied in Persia for three thousand years or so. His dainty horns are all set with bright-colored enamel. His front feet are

caught in a tangle of thorns made of silver and bright stones. He is a very gay little animal. Someone who copied him thought of making him serve as the handle for a vase.

It was this sort of thing that the Sumerians did best. Before 3000 B.C. they were making vases and cups for the table and ladies' hair ornaments, all of gold. Either they did not care so much about making beautiful statues, or else they were

not so very clever at carving stone, for their statues seem clumsy beside those of the Egyptians, though they could make animals look very fierce and lifelike.

But they knew how to make things gay with color. We find little plaques (plāk), or thin plates, made of bright pieces of tile, which show that the Sumerians loved color as much as the Egyptians did. Their temples and palaces must have been very gay with the bright tiles that decorated the surfaces of the high brick walls. These tiles were so shaped that they fitted together to form a picture, just as a picture puzzle does. Out of these fascinating pieces they made a lion, a man, or a duck. All along the lower walls of their temples and gates ran



Photos by Pennsylvania University Museum and British Museum



## THE HISTORY OF ART

rows of these bright-colored tile pictures.

But the things we connect most of all with Sumeria are their seals. Little rollers of stone, they were, carved with a design that stamped itself on soft clay when the stone was rolled over the clay surface. It was with these neat devices that the Sumerians signed their letters; and the useful little affairs were pierced at one end so that they could be strung on a cord and worn around the neck. Other peoples, conquerors of the Sumerians, took over this little invention. A Greek traveler reports that in Babylon "every man carries a seal and a walking stick."

The Sumerians ruled in their beautiful valley for a long, long time. Their ziggurats gave them a great advantage over other peoples round about; for when a great flood descended upon the valley of the two great rivers—as often happened—the Sumerians could stay high and dry in their temple towers while the houses of the conquered peoples round them were washed away. The great Flood that we

read of in the Bible was one of these great valley floods along the Tigris and Euphrates.

But gradually other, more powerful people whom we call Semites (sēm'it), began to turn envious eyes upon this fertile plain where life was so comfortable; and the Sumerians had hard work to keep their thriving cities. These desert tribes kept edging in until at last they had taken over pretty much all Sumeria. They learned what the clever Sumerians knew of writing and building and banking and trade, and gradually mingled with the earlier race until they became one people.

Perhaps the finest thing they have left us is a carving of one of their kings leading his warriors up a mountain. He is shown in the thick of the fight, with his followers surging behind him. His foot is placed triumphantly upon two of the fallen foe, and with his spear he has pierced another through.

The very pattern of the carving seems to be pushing him up the hill to victory. We call this beautiful relief the stele (stē'lē) of Naram-Sin (nä-räm'sin), for that was the name of the king whose figure it shows. It was carved about 2700 B.C., and is the earliest great work of art that we have from the Semitic race.

It is a pity that we have so few things from these days of early Semitic art. It was then that artists, for the first time, began to have a feeling for landscape, something the Egyptians had never shown. And of course they had fine representations of real or mythical beasts. They had learned how to look at animals, to admire their graceful strength and beautiful proportions; and in later

centuries their descendants are going to follow this habit of their ancestors in the forming of very handsome and imposing beasts.

Of early Babylonian statues very few remain. There is one massive figure of a king named Gudea; he is a squat little fellow, who seems almost to be a part of his chair. But he has his arms crossed in a powerful, self-contained fashion, and his body has a roundness which is very different from the angular strength of Egyptian statues. It is interesting to note that this figure is carved in the hard diorite (dī'ō-rīt) stone used in



Photo by British Museum

Although the people of ancient Sumeria knew how to make many beautiful things of metal and inlay, and remarkably lifelike sculptures of animals, they never could make figures of men seem very much alive. In the early Sumerian statue above, you may see some of the things which make the sculpture of the lands of Mesopotamia so different from the sculptures you will find in Egypt or later Greece. This figure is round, massive, and stocky. The neck is short, the face large, and the head flat-topped. The plump arms and hands are so tightly clasped to the body that they seem moulded into it. Even when the sculptors of Mesopotamia had acquired a good deal more skill, they kept on making statues of much this shape.



Photo by British Museum

Most famous of all the works of Assyrian sculptors are the reliefs that show King Ashur-bani-pal hunting. Here lithe wild horses flee for their lives, and majestic lions fight a hopeless battle against men armed with arrows and spears. And here we see

something that the cave man, with all his cleverness at making animals look real, had never shown—the pathetic suffering of a dying beast. Above is the famous relief of a wounded lioness who, disabled by many arrows, struggles bravely against death.

Egypt. Someone had to make a trip far inland to bring the artist that lasting material.

Of the new country Babylon became the chief city. On other pages of these books you may read the story of how it spread its power far and wide until it touched the borders of the Egyptian empire, which was then at the height of its grandeur. In fact, these people who lived along the two great rivers may even have taught the Egyptians something about how to make beautiful things; we know that they had many such things at home in Babylon. Unhappily, not very many of their treasures have lasted through the centuries. Those we have, come from palaces and not from tombs; and since the lack of stone forced them to build their palaces of brick, not much of their grandeur is left to-day except a heap of dust. But we do have some of their cylindrical seals and their boundary stones, and a few of their reliefs. The seals they had learned to make from the Sumerians, and very beautiful they were, for they were cut in stone with exquisite care. Every bit of stone was precious in that stoneless land.

Now just as the people of Babylon had

conquered earlier peoples, they in their turn had to bend the knee before another people who lived in the northern part of the valley of the two great rivers. These were the Assyrians, who ever since 3000 B.C. had lived in their little city of Assur, and had gradually increased in strength until, in about 800 B.C., they were able to conquer the ancient kingdom of Babylonia and plant their own rule in its place.

#### The Art of a Warlike People

They were a warlike race, bent upon wealth and conquest. From their capital city of Nineveh they terrorized all the countries round about the Fertile Crescent. Their religion was hard and cruel, and one of their favorite sports was the lion hunt. They have left us a carving of a lioness dying after many arrows have pierced her sides. One of the arrows has broken her back and paralyzed her hind legs. But with her last strength she drags herself proudly along to face her enemy. The artist who did this relief had looked long at animals before he carved his wounded lioness.

The Assyrians were lucky in having more stone than their neighbors to the south had

## THE HISTORY OF ART

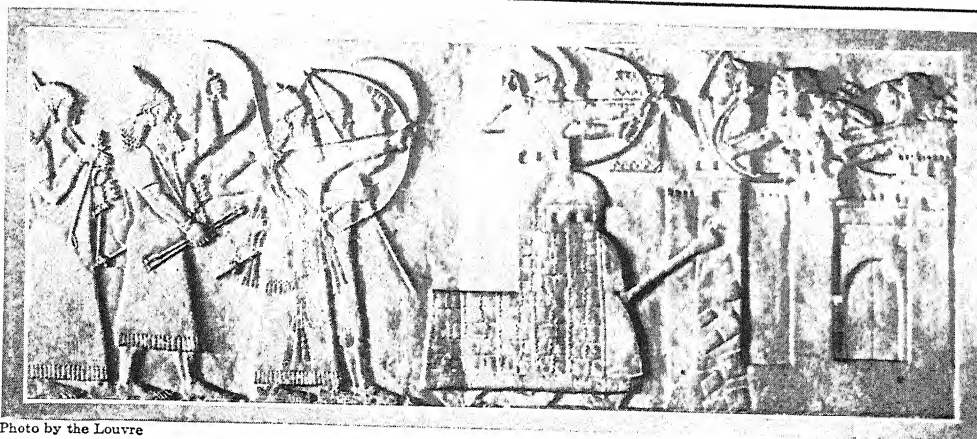


Photo by the Louvre

In this relief from the palace of Ashur-nazir-pal, you see the pompous and heavy figures of the Assyrian king and his retinue. With the aid of a battering ram, they are attacking an enemy city.

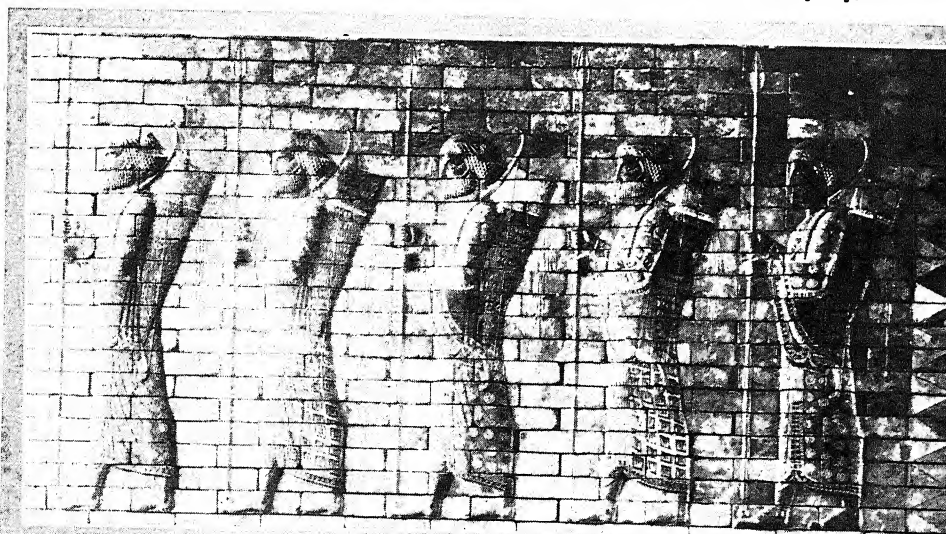


Photo by British Museum

This relief of enameled brick, showing a procession of archers, may once have brightened the walls of the throne room of King Darius, at Susa. These soldiers

belonged to a dark-skinned race of Persia. Their black skin and dark hair contrasts sharply with their bright clothes and turquoise-blue background.

had, and they used it for lining the walls of their palaces with miles of carved reliefs showing the deeds of their kings. The stone they used was alabaster; and they employed it for carving massive statues, too. For instance, they made some very strange animals to stand guard at the entrance of their king's palace. Each of these animals had the head of a man, the wings of an eagle, the mane of a lion, and the hoofs and tail of a bull. The Children of Israel saw these animals during their captivity in Babylon, and you will find

the creatures in the visions of the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel. From those visions the later Christian writers separated the four beings—man, eagle, lion, and ox—and used them as the symbols of the four evangelists. We shall meet them again, therefore, when we come to the story of early Christian art.

This notion of putting animals to guard a gate the Assyrians got from the Hittites, another ancient people who had built up an empire in Asia Minor a few centuries before. From them, too, the Assyrians learned to

cover the lower part of their walls with carvings.

Strange as it may seem to us to-day, the Assyrians had almost no separate paintings. But that does not mean that they had no color. They loved to paint the carvings that ran around a wall, and they had gorgeous tiles and glazed bricks.

At last Nineveh, too, went the way of Ur and early Babylon. About 600 B. C. she fell, and strangely enough, passed under the sway of Babylon again. But it was not the old Babylonians who had once more come to power; this was a new race who had rebuilt an empire on the ruins of the

old one—a desert people whom we shall refer to as the Chaldeans. Now was the time of the city's greatest glory, the time of the famous Nebuchadnezzar (nēb'ū-kād-nēz'ār), of Bible fame. His were the Hanging Gardens; his, the magnificent city with its mighty walls.

## The Splendor of the Ishtar Gate

Splendid indeed it must have been. As you walked up the Procession Street to the famous Ishtar Gate, a long row of lions in bright glazed tiles escorted you—bright yellow lions against a background of blue, with a row of flowers above them. And on the gate were rows of gay animals, rising story above story, forty feet into the air. Gorgeous tiles like these decorated the outside walls of Nebuchadnezzar's palace. For in Babylon, as in Assyria and Sumeria as well, bright tiles and glazes had to take the place of paintings on the walls.

And then Babylon fell again (539 B.C.). This time it was the Persians, under their emperor Cyrus, who overthrew the ancient city. Theirs was to be the greatest empire of the ancient world before the coming of the conquering Alexander. The names of their kings—Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes (zūr'k'sēz)—are famous to this day, and famous to-day is the splendor of their reigns, when their

archers spread the Persian power over all of Asia Minor, and even tried to conquer the distant land of Greece. You may see a row of those very archers as they marched, with their spears and bows and quivers, in a bright procession of glazed tiles around the walls of Darius' palace

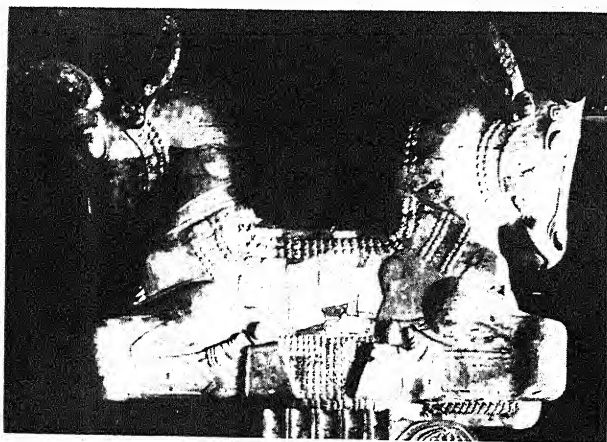


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

Two bulls back to back make this capital from a column in an ancient Persian palace. The charming animals are made of white alabaster and bright gold.

at Susa (sōo'sā). Their robes of bright yellow and purple or of white and purple are covered with elaborate embroidery, and their hair and beards are curled, as they would have been in the days of old Babylon.

The art of making these bright glazes the Persians must have learned from the Babylonians whom they conquered. For the Persians had been shepherds in the early days, and had wandered about with their flocks in search of grass; they had little need of fine buildings or of things to put in them. Then suddenly, under their conquering rulers, they found themselves with an empire on their hands and great cities to build. They had never had to build cities before, and really had very little idea as to how to go about it. So they studied and learned from the countries they had conquered and from those they tried to conquer. Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Greece, all taught them something. Their art is very colorful, and



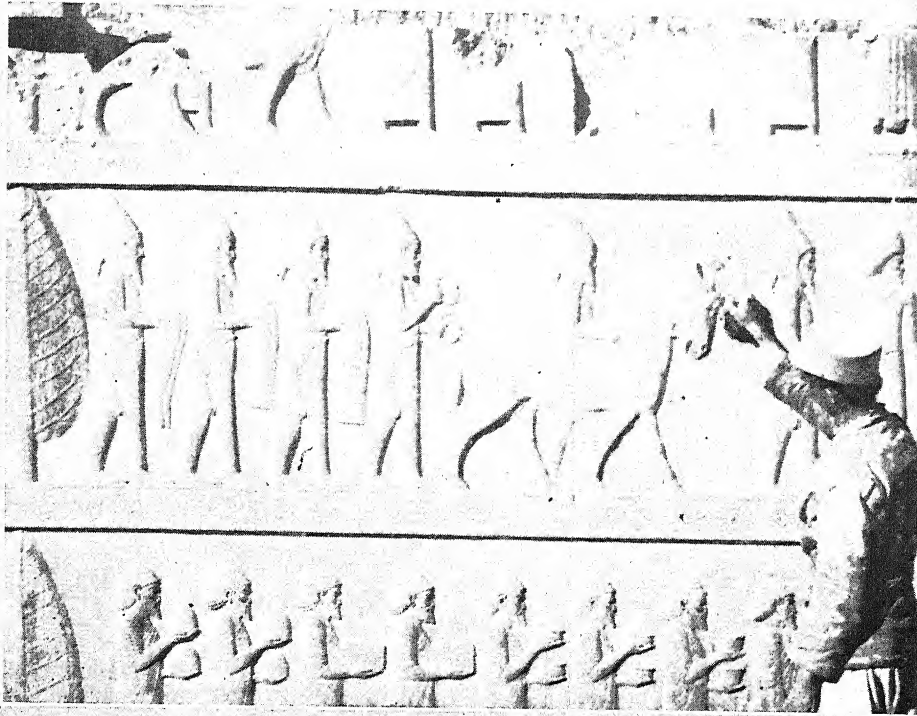


Photo by International News

This fine carving is part of a long sculptured relief which flanks the monumental stairway of the great palace of King Xerxes at Persepolis. In this majestic relief are row on row of marching men. Some of them are soldiers of the King's guard and some are

tribute bearers from subject states. All walk in solemn and stately procession toward the great palace, just as they must have done when they were alive and when the palace, now in ruin, stood in all its glory of tall columns and rich ornament.

must have been gorgeous in its day, but it is not very new. Glazed tiles from Babylonia, winged bulls from Assyria, columns from Egypt, all of them find their way into Persian art. We have a beautiful capital from one of their columns—two bulls back to back, magnificently fashioned of white alabaster and bright gold, with an ornamentation of elaborate scrolls. But to the gracious dignity of Egypt and the fierce splendor of Babylonia and Assyria, the Persians brought their own fine gift for color. We see it later in their rugs and pottery and books. They are masters of it even to-day.

With the passing of the Persian empire—and of course it had to pass, as every empire must—we bid farewell to the art of the fertile valley through which the two great rivers flowed. It had been a massive and majestic art, full of bright colors and of strength and

power; but it had mostly been used to help out the architect, and not to give people a joy in beautiful things for their own sake. We may be grateful to those Eastern artists, however, for teaching the world how to do superb and lifelike animals, and for discovering the beauty of landscapes. And we may be glad that, living as they did in a dull-toned, dusty land, they learned to harmonize vivid and beautiful colors. We do not greatly value this Eastern art to-day; we understand the Greeks and Romans better. But it was from Western Asia that the Greeks, when they began to make beautiful things, found that they could learn the most; and it was there that they took many models to study from. The work of the Greeks might well have been very different if it had not been for the peoples who lived between those two great rivers.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

No. 4

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### SUPREME MASTERS OF FINE ART

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

How Troy and Cnossos were dug out of the ground, 11-31  
How the shaggy Northerners came to Greece, 11-34  
What makes the "red-figured ware" so famous, 11-36  
Why "The Discus Thrower" is so fine a piece of sculpture, 11-37

The great Greek sculptors of 500-400 B.C., 11-43  
The Acropolis stood for the glory of all Athens, 11-44  
Final perfection is reached in the frieze of the Parthenon, 11-46  
How Aristotle defined art, 11-46

#### *Things to Think About*

What happened to the uncivilized Northerners when they went south?  
Why did the Greek artist put such good work on his vases?

Why is Greek sculpture so restful, yet so full of life?  
What did the Greek way of life have to do with Greek art?

#### *Related Material*

Archaeological discoveries, 5-16-20  
History, 5-149-55, 166-73, 175-82  
Sports and games, 14-471, 475  
Architecture, 11-415-25

Philosophers and scientists, 13-1-12  
Greek literature, 5-159, 172  
Greek and Roman mythology, 14-406-12, 422-24

#### *Leisure-time Activities*

Make a vase of modeling clay in imitation of a Greek amphora, 11-35  
Draw a copy of a Greek statue,

11-39  
Make a model of the front of the Parthenon, 11-43

#### *Summary Statement*

The Greeks have given us an art, and especially in sculpture, which is still used as the basis for

the teaching of art in every art school in the world.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

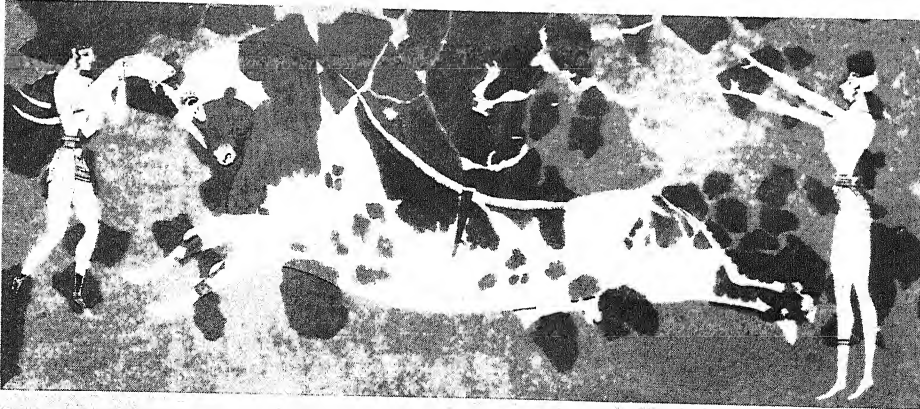


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

These daring young Cretans are doing circus "stunts" over the back of a very active bull. Possibly such feats as these were in honor of the Cretan bull god, and were performed before a gallery of interested spectators. The white-skinned girls have exchanged their many-flounced skirts for men's loin cloths—a

more fitting costume for acrobatics. The "Toreador Fresco," as this painting has been called, is considered one of the finest of Cretan works of art, because the design is so perfectly balanced. The bull is dappled brown and white, the loin cloths are yellow, and the background is blue.

## SUPREME MASTERS of FINE ART

*In All the World No Men Have Surpassed the Ancient Greeks as Creators of Ideal Grace and Beauty*

**O**NE stormy night about a century ago a sailor jumped into the sea just off the coast of Norway and brought a drowning man to shore. It was a momentous act, for if that man had drowned, many discoveries might have gone unmade for hundreds of years. His name was Heinrich Schliemann (shlē'män). He had grown up as a poor grocer's boy, but he happened to have heard the story of the Trojan War and of the great walls of Troy. Somehow he felt sure that those walls were still there. Schliemann was very poor at that time, but he never lost his dream. Finally, when he was a man of middle age, he made money enough to play with his hobby. He went to the place where Homer had situated Troy in his story, and insisted upon digging. Everybody laughed at him and said he might as well dig for fairy land.

But he found a real Troy after all, buried in the ground. In fact, he found nine Troys, one on top of the other. The sixth one really had the walls of Schliemann's dreams. It was the Troy of Homer.

Of course that does not mean that Schliemann found the walls and houses standing up. The city had been built of mud brick, and it was now hardly more than a pile of rubbish. But the fact that there was anything there at all was highly exciting. If there was a real Troy, there must be a real city of Mycenae (mī-sē'nē), from which Homer's chieftains had set out to win back the lost Helen. So Schliemann hastened to Mycenae, and there he did find great things—walls of stone, a gateway carved with lions, beautiful crowns and jewels, and tableware of gold. Here was a whole new civilization that nobody had suspected, going back almost as far as that of Sumeria or Egypt.

But Mycenae did not seem to be the center of it. Another man, following Schliemann, turned to Crete, both because the old Greek story of the Minotaur put a proud king there, and because Crete was a sunny, fertile island, easy to protect, and a likely place for early men to settle. Sure enough, Sir Arthur Evans uncovered Cnossos (nös'ūs), the center of what we call the Cretan Age. There

at Cnossos, sometime between 3000 B.C. and 1500 B.C., lived great kings with a vast palace of many courts, like Ikhnaton's palace in Egypt. The walls were gaily painted with flowers and birds that were so much like the work of Akhetaton that we suppose some artists must have come from Egypt to Crete or gone from Crete to Egypt. Perhaps the kings exchanged artists as a friendly gesture. The palace at Cnossos was very modern in its equipment. It even had a bathroom. In fact it had an enormous number of rooms of all sorts. It was called the Labyrinth (lăb'î-rînth).

Probably the story of Ariadne's thread—which you will find on another page of these books—grew out of the fact that so many people really did get lost in the numberless halls of the palace. You remember that Ariadne gave Theseus a spool of thread of which she held one end. He unwound it as he went. To find his way back, all he had to do was to wind up his spool again and follow where the thread took him.

Sir Arthur Evans found many of the paintings and vases and jewelry that had been used in the great days of which the legend tells us. He found many little statues, too, of the Cretan snake goddess, with her tight waist like those of the ladies in 1890.

#### Art the Cretans Liked

The Cretans were very fond of pictures of bulls. We are showing a picture of a boy and two girls doing "stunts" with a wild bull. It is very lively, and it may tell us something of the story about the Minotaur to whom seven youths and seven maidens from Athens were sacrificed every year. In the pictures the youths are always darker than the

maidens, for the Cretans, like the Egyptians, always painted women with white skin and men with deep red skin. The boy has just turned a somersault over the back of the bull, and the girl has her hands under its horns and is about to make her leap into the arms of the girl on the other side.

The Cretans were fond of sea creatures, too, as a seafaring race would be likely to be. They loved to paint dolphins and flying fishes, and other animals and plants of the sea.

The figure of the "Cup-bearer" is the first painting that was dug up. His large bright eye stared out of the ground as they uncovered him, and the workmen thought there must be magic about him. It

was a very slow process to get the crumbling plaster out of the ground whole, and a man was set to watch the precious picture all through the night. He told a vivid story in the morning of how he had gone to sleep in spite of himself, and how the angry Cupbearer had appeared to him in a dream; at this he had waked with a start, feeling that there were ghosts about. It is certainly a very

striking figure, with its dark brown body and slim waist. There are a whole row of these figures, making a design of long cups and long bodies against a bright blue wall.

When Cnossos was destroyed about 1100 B.C., the stronghold of Cretan civilization passed over to the mainland. Perhaps the most famous and beautiful things that these people made are the Vaphio (vă'fî-ō) gold cups. They are of solid gold and are shaped like teacups, with very beautiful designs beaten out of the gold sides. They show us again how early in history man learned to make pictures of animals. The human figure was a harder problem, and it took the later

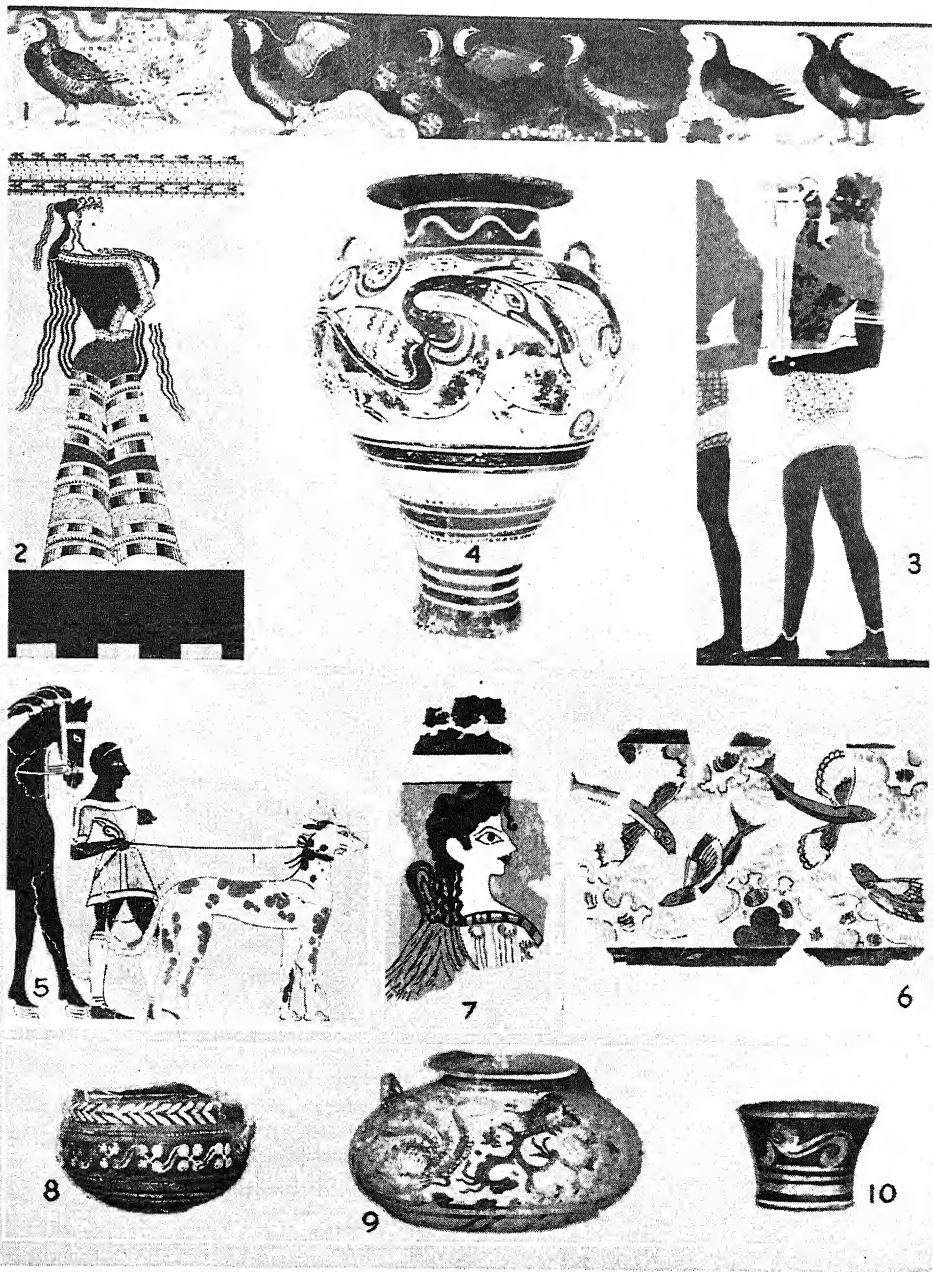


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

This is one of the bright-colored jars the Cretans made before they turned to more sober tones and patterns more nearly like Nature's own. The curving designs are painted in orange, crimson, and cream against a background of shining black.



## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art and British Museum

No. 1, a frieze of partridges found in the house—perhaps in the dining room—of a townsman of Crete. No. 2, a priestess who once walked in religious procession about the walls of a palace at Tiryns. She wears the tight Cretan bodice—painted a brilliant red—and the long skirt of many flounces and many colors that was the fashion in Crete. No. 3 is the "Cupbearer." He wears a richly embroidered loin cloth, silver anklets, a bracelet, necklace, and earrings. His skin is tanned,

his hair is dark and wavy, and, like all Cretans, he has an extremely narrow waist. No. 4, Mycenaean vase. No. 5, part of a fresco from Tiryns, showing a boar hunt. No. 7. This lively maiden is a priestess of Crete. No. 6, a small frieze of flying fish painted in lovely shades of yellow and blue. Often the frescoes of Crete are nothing but scattered fragments which scholars must restore by studying other frescoes. Nos. 8, 9, and 10, Minoan vases.

## THE HISTORY OF ART

Greeks to solve that. Not only do these cups

have wonderfully lifelike pictures of bulls, but the designs have been cunningly made to fit the shape of the cup. Such treasures as these, all in bright gold, tell their own story of a rich, gifted people, and suggest that when Homer talked of a famous palace where the walls were of bronze with a blue frieze around them, and where the doors were of gold, he was simply looking at what he saw about him

and not making up a fantastic dream in his head.

Several times in the history of the world men from the north, far less civilized than the southerners around the Mediterranean but bold and hardy, have come down toward the warm south where life is easy. As they traveled down from their cold homes, they would be tempted onward by the warm weather; and perhaps they would meet traders with fine things to sell who would tell glowing tales about life in the south. So one day the shaggy northerners would appear over the mountains. Because they were a strong, young race, and because the southerners had grown a little soft with all their wealth and ease, the Northmen would conquer the south and settle down in the cities of their captives. Then a new civilization would begin, and a new art.

Some people talk of fair-haired northerners

even down in Egypt, but there is no proof of their ever having seen that land. It may be more likely that they came to Greece. No one knows where the Dorians in Greece came from. Certainly they poured down from somewhere to the north, and took the country for their own. Some centuries after Homer's civilization had died out, we find the Dorians and other tribes of uncivilized bar-

barians settled in Greece and fashioning a civilization of their own—the civilization that was to be in many ways the greatest that the world has seen.

You can see what savages these Dorians were in their early days from the kind of art they favored. About 800 B.C. or 900 B.C. they were making only crude pottery that was hardly better than that of the Stone Age.

Homer is the link between these men and the civilized Cretans, who had been in Greece before them. The Dorians liked the stories of Homer, and they liked to claim his warriors as their own ancestors. Some of the earliest pictures that they made are illustrations of Homer's "Iliad." In the seventh century B.C. they were making pictures on their pottery with figures that begin to look like human beings.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

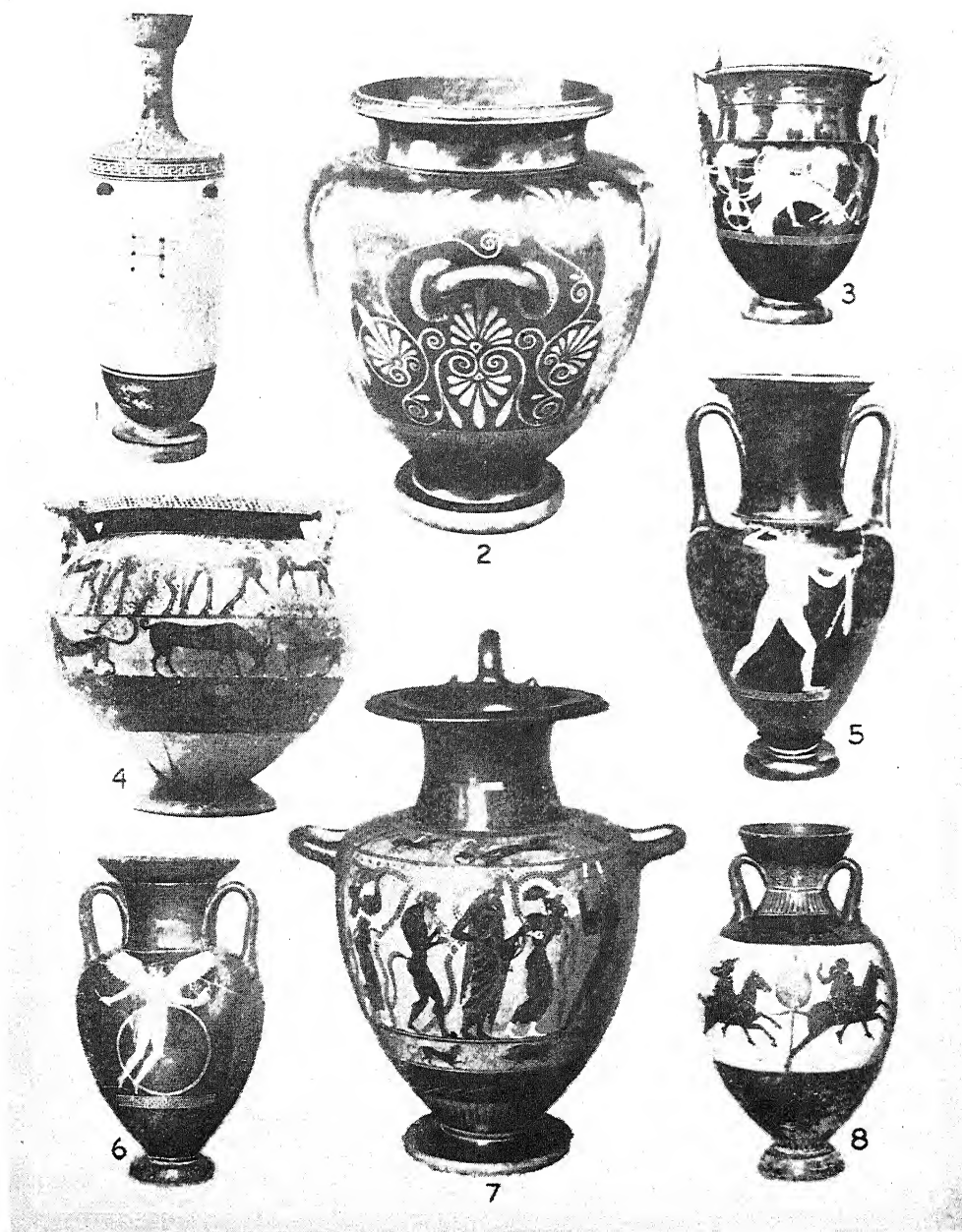
Among the treasures found in the rich graves of Mycenae were several masks—like the one above—made of thin sheets of beaten gold. They are all different, and evidently were meant to be portraits. They probably covered the faces of the dead.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

A tiny room—scarcely larger than a cupboard—in the palace of Cnossos was the shrine of the Cretan "goddess of wild things." Here shining faience statuettes of the "snake goddess" and her priestesses were set up, and about the shrine were strewn doves and small animals of the sea. One such statuette is shown above.

## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art and British Museum

From the beautiful vases above, you may see how completely the Greeks were masters in the art of drawing human figures and of posing them to fit perfectly into a given space. No. 1, a white oil jar made in about 450 B.C. No. 2, a fifth century "amphora." No. 3, a red-figured amphora decorated with scenes of the battle of the centaurs and men and the battle of Greeks and Amazons. No. 4, a sixth century

"krater" from Corinth. No. 5, a tall red-figured amphora of the fifth century B.C. The striding figure is Zeus. No. 6, a red-figured amphora decorated with a charming picture of the little god of love. He carries a dove and is gracefully rolling a hoop. No. 7, a vase showing Bacchus and his wild and merry retinue. No. 8, an amphora. It was filled with wine and presented to a winner at the great athletic games.

## THE HISTORY OF ART

From this time, for instance, we have a plate painted in black and purple which shows the fight between Hector and Menelaus (mĕn'ĕ-lă'ūs). Everyone knows how the Trojan Hector had slain the great Greek warrior Patroclus (pă-trō'klūs), and how Menelaus "of the loud war cry" came out into the battle to avenge him. The two fighters fell on each other like ravening lions. And thus we see them in the picture. It is all filled up with other designs, but we can make out the two great warriors with their long spears, and with their large oval eyes shaped in the style of the Cretans.

A hundred years later the Greeks have become really clever with their brush of black paint, and we can but wonder at their speed in learning how to draw so well. We can see their skill in such a picture as that of Achilles (ă-kil'ĕz) and Ajax playing a game of dice. The two heroes are very intent as they bend over the table. We can tell them apart because Ajax has taken off his helmet and set it on his shield. The writing says that Ajax calls "3" and Achilles "4." This is no such cluttered design as the earlier one; the artist has thought it out with great care.

### The Greek Art of Vase Painting

Another fifty years, and the Greeks are doing the kind of vase painting for which they are famous. It is a harder thing than simply painting a black figure on the clay of the vase. In the celebrated "red-figured ware" the artist had to make delicate outlines for his figures and then fill in all his background with black. Then with a very sure hand he had to make tiny, very thin lines for hair, eyes, drapery, and muscles.

There is a vase painting of the strife between Ajax and Odysseus (ō-dīs'ūs), or

Ulysses, over the armor of Achilles. The Greek chiefs are voting to see who shall have the famous armor. The votes are falling for Odysseus. He is standing on the left, holding up his hands in delight over his victory. Over on the right Ajax bows his head sadly. Athena stands in the center as judge. How

very cleverly and delicately the outstretched arms are drawn, and the tiny lines of the drapery! The whole picture makes a fine pattern against the black background. It is an astonishing piece of art when you think of all it means. For vase painting was only a humble profession, almost like that of carpentry today, and it was only humble craftsmen who did this fine art. This picture is signed by a man named Duris. And yet no one of the writers of the time ever thought of mentioning Duris as an artist. He was just a workman! But in Greece even such a workman was expected to be clever in his art. That is why the Greeks were by far the greatest artists of ancient times, and the beginners of nearly all the art in the world to our day.

To see this spirit of art among the Greeks we might just glance at one of their mirrors. What is a Greek mirror like? It has a circle to reflect the face, a handle to hold it by, and a stand to set it up by in case you do not want to hold it. A mirror is just a thing for everyday use; all the more reason, said the Greeks, for making it beautiful if you are going to look at it all the time! And how to make it beautiful? Surely in some way that will not be wasteful, but will suit the way a mirror must be made. And how is a mirror made? With a handle that must hold the circle of the mirror. So let us show the handle doing that. If we shape the handle into a human figure holding the disk



Photo by Alinari

We know that this famous vase is by Exekias (ĕk-sĕ'ki-ās), a master of the sixth century B.C. Several of his delightful vase paintings have come down to us. It shows Ajax and Achilles playing a game of dice. With infinite care the artist cut many, many tiny lines to make the details of the picture—hair, patterns of clothes, and so on—stand out in white line.



## THE HISTORY OF ART

of the mirror on his head, we shall surely have hit upon a good way. So the Greek workman makes a figure to hold the mirror, and puts two little winged cupids on each side to strengthen the fastening and to connect the straight handle with the round mirror. It is all perfectly clear and logical—and very beautiful.

It is the same way with all the little things that make up what we call the "minor arts" among the Greeks. The coins are lovely things. Of course they were mere money to be passed around, and the only thing that really mattered was that they should be full weight. But the Greeks must have them beautiful. So a given coin will have a whole tiny chariot with horses on one side, and a lovely head of Arethusa

(är'ë-thü'sä), goddess of the sea, on the other side.

In every branch of art it is the same story—a story of great cleverness to begin with, and then of long, hard work. For it takes the hardest kind of work to be an artist.

And certainly the famous artists—the ones that the Greeks did talk about—had worked very hard to master their art. The famous statue of the "Discus Thrower," of Myron, shows that already in 450 B.C. the Greeks knew all about how the human body

is put together, and what happens to all the bones and muscles when the body twists around. That is something that students spend years learning in the art schools to-day. The Greeks had learned how to make a

statue stand on its feet, and not seem to be toppling over. Besides, as you gaze upon the discus thrower, you see that they had found out a wonderful way of making a man look calm in the midst of a great muscular strain—so that his statue would be pleasant to look at. Otherwise you would be wishing that he would put his discus down and rest a bit. The sculptor has caught him in the moment of rest just before he throws. Thousands of later sculptors have tried in vain to do that. Above all, as you

walk around the thrower you find that he is just as good to look at from one point as from any other. He is a beautiful figure no matter where you stand, and each view leads you around to the next. Nothing has escaped the sculptor, not even the way the man's toes grip the ground so that he may keep his balance.

In these ways Greek art was a thing of wisdom. The discus thrower, made about 450 B.C., comes from what is called the "Transitional Period," between the earlier beginnings and the great days of Greek art. It was only about five hundred years since

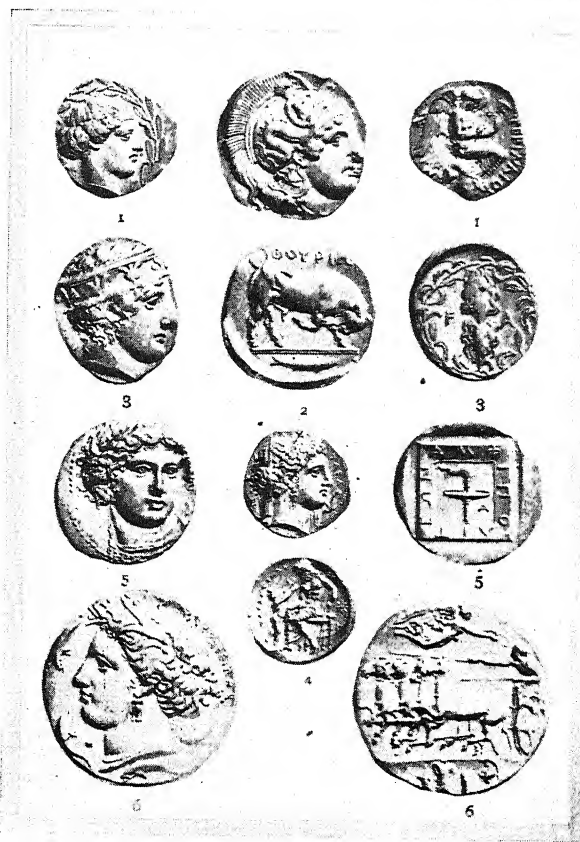


Photo by British Museum

Take plenty of time to look at these Greek coins, and notice their exquisite detail. They belong to the best period—from 480 to 400 B. C. No. 1 is from Terina; 2, Thurium; 3, Elis; 4, Tarentum; 5, Amphipolis; 6, Syracuse. All are of silver except No. 4, which is of gold.



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these men had arrived in Greece, and that is not very long for wild men from the north to learn so much of beauty.

Of course Greece is a very unusual country. It is a mountainous land, with small fertile valleys between the ridges. The sea cuts it up into all sorts of bays and islands along the shore. There is a great deal of coast line for the size of the country. The Greeks were familiar with the sight of the sea stretching out endlessly to the horizon. And when they looked back at their hill-sides they saw them bright with flowers.

Two things about the land of Greece left a strong mark on the ways of her people. First of all is the kind of air they lived in; you can never know what this means till you go to Greece. The air is extraordinarily clear and extraordinarily soft.

When the director of the Pergamon Museum in Berlin tried to produce the effect of that air indoors, as a setting for the great altar of Pergamon, he spent ten years working on the problem. He tried many a mixture of tints on the wall and many a skylight and a rose-colored floor. But he got the effect at last, and his museum is a proof of all the difference that light and air can make. The statues and carvings in Berlin are not so wonderful, for instance, as those in the British Museum in London; and yet there is more magic in the way things look in Berlin.

That was the kind of air the Greeks lived in all the time. It made everything stand out so that they could not miss any beautiful outline. Any picture of the temple of Nike

Apteros (nī'kē āp'tē-rōs), or the Wingless Victory, hanging upon the edge of the Acropolis at Athens, will give an idea of how that wonderful air set things off.

The second thing about the land of Greece which helped to form the people was the little valleys that divided the country up into small communities where everybody knew everybody else, and where all the citizens were very proud of their own towns. Every single person seemed a larger and more important creature than in some vaster land. Each town was spurred on to do new and better things in rivalry with other towns. This kept all minds alert. Our notions of democracy and of individual rights are an old story to us now, but the Greeks seem to have been the first people who really thought about them. No land had been democratic before, and nobody had had any particular rights—and that is one of the reasons why the Greeks were so different from other people of the ancient world.

To these Greeks, above all the rest, "the proper study of mankind was man." First and last they were interested in people—in men and women. They would have been amazed to see so many of our scientists spending their lives in the study of insects and snakes and fishes. To be sure, they liked the animals and trees and flowers well enough, but they found people far more interesting. So it was human beings that they drew and carved over and over for a thousand years. That is one reason why they did the human figure so much better than anybody else. They gave their thoughts to that one

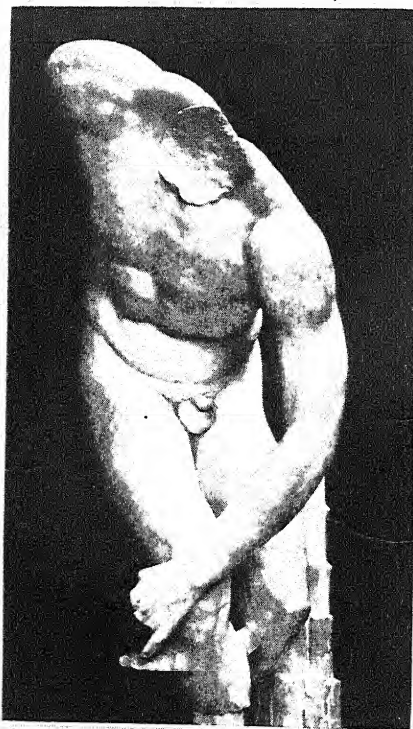
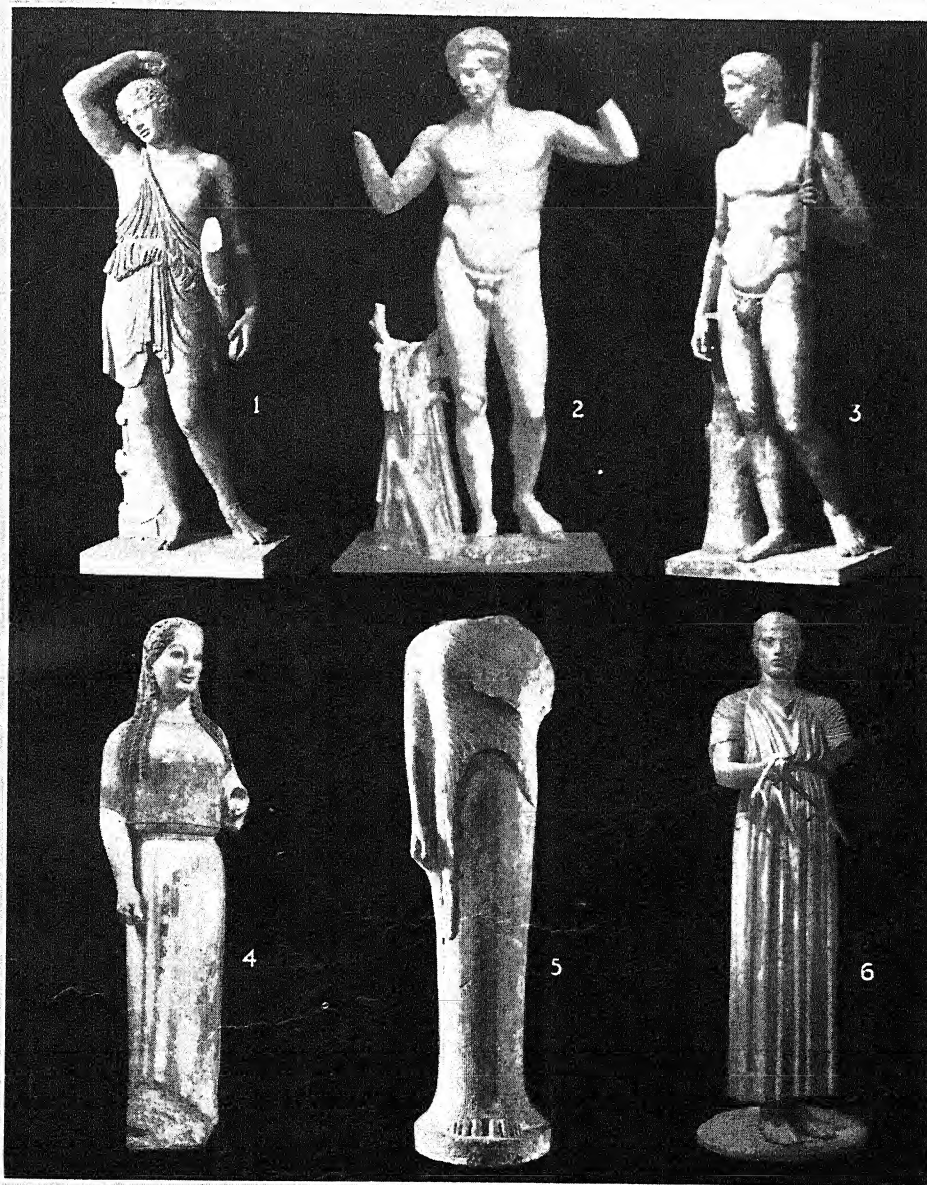


Photo by Alinari

Above is one of several Roman copies of the "Discus Thrower," the beautiful statue by Myron. From this and other copies, scholars have been able to reconstruct the famous statue as it must have looked.

## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Alinari

Do not fail to look carefully at these Greek statues. No. 5 is an ancient statue from the island of Samos. It was made in about the middle of the sixth century B.C., and has been called the "Hera of Samos." Even though it is stiff and unnaturally round, this figure has charm, the charm of simplicity. In its many tiny folds we can see—even thus early—a certain grace of arrangement. No. 4, one of the "Acropolis Maidens," from the middle of the sixth century B.C. The artist had not learned how to make the figure of a human being look real, and so he turned what he saw into a pattern. He made a pattern of the face, of the curling

locks, and of the folds of the drapery. From the result we can learn that to be artistic, a thing does not have to be true to life. No. 6 is the famous "Charioteer" of Delphi, made in about 470 B.C., at a time when the Greeks were combining the patterns of their early period with a greater truth to nature. The simple folds of the drapery may seem to be all alike, but really they all hang differently. That is why the folds are so beautiful. No. 1, an Amazon, a Roman copy of a Greek statue. No. 2, Roman copy of the "Youth Binding His Hair" by Polyclitus. No. 3, Roman copy of the "Spear Bearer" by Polyclitus.

## THE HISTORY OF ART

On the Greek island of Aegina stands a lovely temple of the early fifth century B.C. The statues of its pediments are famous for their careful grouping and for their strong and truthful modeling.

In both of the pediments Athena stands in the center, quietly dominating a scene of violent action. On either side are the twisted figures of fighting or fallen warriors—all beautifully fitted into the triangular frame.

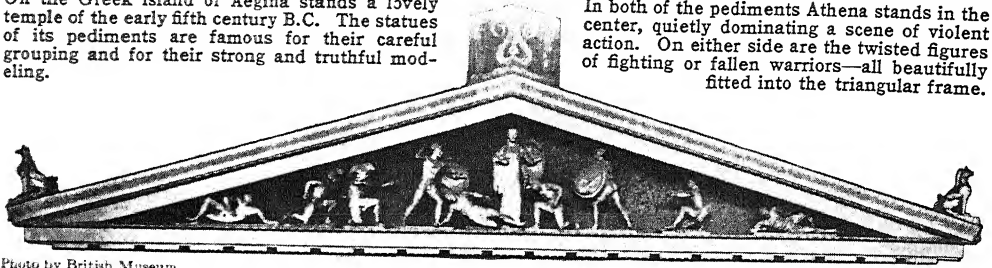


Photo by British Museum

problem all the time. We can see this in the earliest things they did.

They could do very little at the start in sculpture. Their first statues are not very much more than blocks of stone. After a while they cut out the two legs and made them stand apart. Then they had their troubles with the faces. The curious "archaic smile" of their early statues may not have been meant to be a smile at all. It is a rather difficult thing, when you are carving a block of stone, to make the mouth join the cheeks in the right way. The earlier sculptors may have made a smile merely because they could do no better. In the statue of a maiden which was made about 580 B.C. we have something that looks a good deal like a wooden doll with wide, staring eyes and a stiff figure.

Perhaps the most famous early Greek statues belong to a group carved on a temple at Aegina (ĕ-jĭ'nâ). It

is a battle scene. The Greeks had been having plenty of battles themselves at the time when the temple was built, between 490 and 480 B.C. But as a rule they did not care to picture actual battles. These seemed too near and too real. Instead they usually commemorated their victories with a story-book combat—such as the stirring ones in Homer.

A Greek temple usually had a triangular pediment above the columns at each end, and it was in this pediment that the artists put the largest of their carvings. The triangle made a queer frame for the sculptures, but the artists found that a battle could be fitted into it very well. They could put the wounded lying down in the low corners, with kneeling archers or struggling fighters next them, while in the center they could

place Athena standing and watching for the outcome of the struggle. Only a hundred years after the

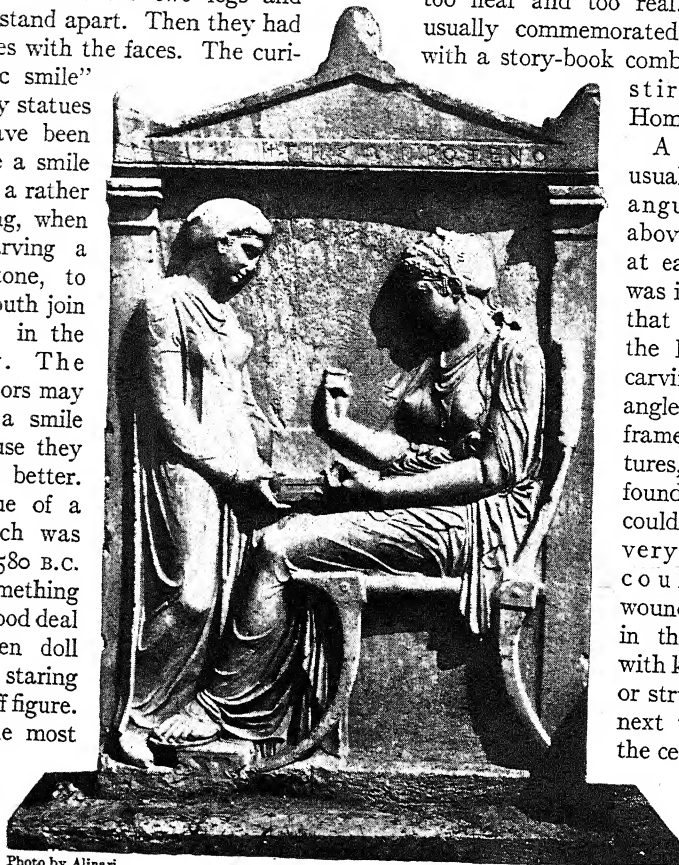


Photo by Alinari

The Egyptians and Assyrians made beautiful reliefs, but they did not know how to give a flat stone depth or how to lift the figure from its background and make it look solid and lifelike. The lovely Hegeso relief, above, shows how well the sculptors of Greece had solved the problem by the end of the fifth century B.C. Instead of just two levels—the level of the figure and the lower level of the background—there are many levels, each leading us further back into the stone and giving us a feeling of space and distance.





Photo by Alinari

With their delicate, transparent draperies clinging to their graceful forms, the Seasons help Aphrodite to rise from the foamy sea. The intertwining of their

arms and the lovely curves of their bodies make a perfect pattern. This is the famous "Ludovisi (166'-dō-vé'zē) relief"; it is now in Rome.

Acropolis maiden took her place like a stiff ramrod, a Greek sculptor could do a pediment with many figures in all sorts of natural attitudes.

#### When Figures Became Lifelike

By the time of the temple of Zeus at Olympia the artists have learned how to make even the figures lying down in the corners of the pediment look altogether lifelike. The west pediment of this temple shows a picture of battle between the Lapithae (lăp'ī-thē), a tribe of men, and the centaurs (sēn'tōr). These mythical creatures are struggling, while the god Apollo stands serenely watching. This is another picture full of struggle which is still calm and peaceful to look at.

A great many Greek statues were carved to go on pediments or in other special places in the Greek temples. Others were set up to celebrate a great victory or to honor some great deed. The figure of the charioteer of Delphi (dēl'fī) must have been made to honor the winner of a chariot race. This mighty driver is very sure of himself as he

grips the floor of the chariot with his toes to keep his balance. He stands very tall, and his tunic falls very straight from the belt, which he has fastened high to keep his clothes from getting in the way of his arms. He looks altogether real, though he is almost too proud and handsome to be an ordinary mortal.

#### The Relief Carving of Aphrodite

From about the same time—that is, from the early part of the fifth century B.C.—we have the relief carving of Aphrodite (ăf'rō-dī'tē) rising from the sea. It is carved on a flat slab, with only the front rounded, after the fashion favored by the Egyptians and Assyrians. The three pairs of arms make a lovely pattern of curves, and the marble has been wonderfully carved to show the little folds of the wet clothes. Just as the charioteer's tunic looks dry, heavy, and substantial, these gowns are thin and wet, and plastered to the body.

From the later days of the fifth century we have a fine piece of work in the gravestone of Hegeso (hē-jē'sō). It is a gracious and



The Ludovisi relief is three-sided. In the center is the lovely "Birth of Venus," and on either side, the two fine reliefs shown above.



See how carefully the sculptor has arranged his figures so that they will fit into the odd shape of the stone. He could not have done it better.



Photos by Alinari

In this beautiful relief from the balustrade of the temple of Athena Nike we see how artfully the Greek sculptor could assist Nature in making beautifully patterned folds to mould the form.

even cheerful carving of the dead woman. The family evidently wanted to remember her just as she looked in everyday life. She is sitting in a chair, perhaps in the act of



The most famous of all statues by Phidias was a bronze statue of the Athena of Lemnos. The unusually beautiful Roman head above may well be a copy of Phidias' noble and lovely goddess.

dressing, and her maid is holding out a jewel box for her to choose a necklace. How wonderfully the flat stone of the carving has been turned into a room with people in it!



## THE HISTORY OF ART

This is a reconstruction of the Parthenon as it may have looked in the days of Greece's glory. Its bright colors were softened and mellowed by the strong sunlight.

Perhaps the most famous sculptures in the world are the fragments of the marble statues that filled the pediments of the Parthenon. Below is a reconstruction of the eastern pediment.

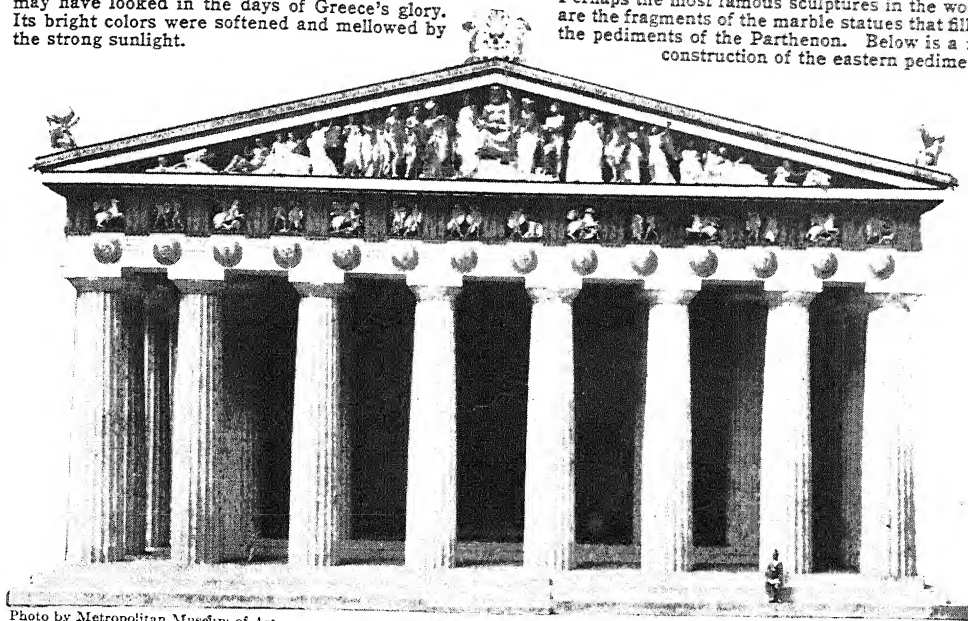


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

We do not know the names of the sculptors who carved these things. We do not even know whether they were *all* great and famous in their day. To the Greeks there were three great names in sculpture during the period from 500 to 400 B.C.—Myron (mī'rŏn), Polyclitus (pŏl'ī-klī'tŭs), and Phidias (fīd'ī-ās). But there are very few statues now left of which we can say "Polyclitus did this," or "Phidias did that." These men were so very famous, however, that many copies were made of their statues, especially later in the Roman days. Even these copies, with the few precious original carvings we have, are enough to tell us of the greatness of the three artists.

### The Maker of the "Discus Thrower"

Myron, the oldest of the three, we know already from the famous "Discus Thrower." Myron was illustrious as a sculptor of athletes, and must have made many statues to honor victors in the Olympic games.

Polyclitus was the man who made a statue that was considered perfect in all its proportions. Many a person in Greece had been wondering just what the ideal man should look like. When the Greeks saw the "Spear

Bearer" of Polyclitus they decided that the head was just the right size for the body, the legs exactly the right length, the hands of just the right dimensions, and that everything else was of the proper size and shape for the perfect man. So the statue was called the "canon," or "measuring stick," for other statues.

### The Great Days of Greek Art

There is a story that the people of Ephesus (ēf'ē-sŭs) once held a competition for a statue of an Amazon to be placed in the temple of Artemis (ār'tē-mīs). When all the statues were ready, it was decided that the artists themselves should vote for the best one. Each artist voted for his own statue first, but every one of them put that of Polyclitus second; so it was decided that Polyclitus was the winner. No one could surpass him in picturing ideal men and women, though he could not put the majesty of the gods into marble quite so well.

In that same contest Phidias took second place. It was Phidias who carved the greatest statues of the gods.

Phidias lived in the great days of Greek art—in those years after the Greeks had

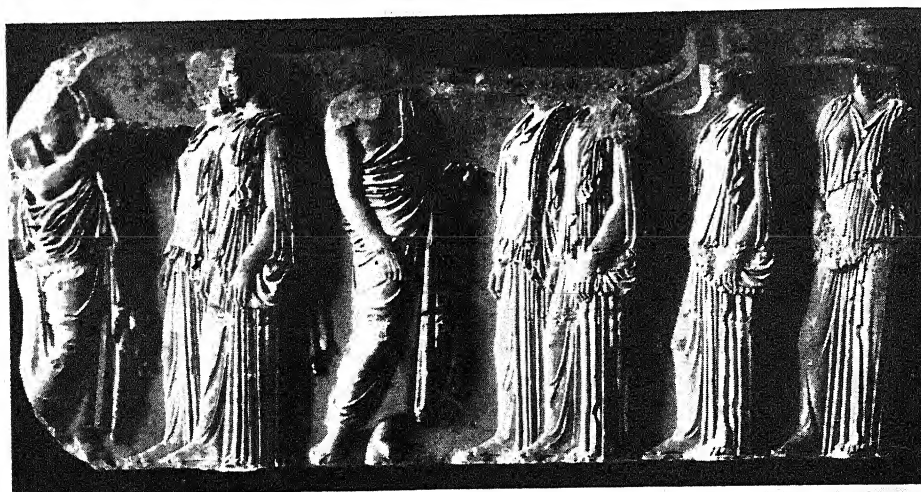


Photo by the Louvre

Phidias could never have made all the sculptures of the Parthenon himself, for it must have taken an army of artists to complete so gigantic a task in so short a time. We do know, however, that he was director of the work, and that he must have been responsible for

the uniform beauty of all the sculptures. It was he who planned the beautiful grouping of figures in the pediments, and the rhythmical arrangement of the frieze, with its figures marching in quiet procession. Part of the frieze is shown above.



Photo by British Museum

This famous group—sometimes called the "Three Fates"—comes from the eastern pediment of the Parthenon. These are the majestic, idealized figures of Phidias and the other artists of the fifth century, when gods were made to look like gods and not like men. From these draperies we can see one reason

why Greek art is such a great art. Natural as the drapery may look, we know that the heavy wool and linen that the Athenians wore could not have been so sheer nor have moulded the form so beautifully. The artist also improved on nature in arranging his folds; he turned them into an artistic pattern.

beaten back the Persians, and when the city of Athens was the proudest place in the world. The people turned joyously to the building and decoration of Athena's great temple on the Acropolis (ă-krŏp'ŏ-līs), that beautiful hilltop where the Athenians put

the buildings that belonged to all the people. The Acropolis stood for the glory of all Athens, and the eyes of the people looked lovingly up at the magnificent buildings and statues crowning it in sharp outline against the clear sky. Sailors far out at sea caught

## THE HISTORY OF ART

their first glimpse of home from the glint of the sun on the spear of the great bronze statue of Athena, which stood in front of her temple, the Parthenon (pär'thē-nŏn).

Just how much of the carving on that temple was done by the hand of Phidias we do not know; but we do know that he was in charge of the whole work, that the ideas were his, and that sometimes he must have taken a chisel and done some cutting himself, in some place where no one else could do it to suit him.

The Acropolis of Athens is probably the most famous piece of ground in all the world, and the fact stands to the honor of Greek art. If you had lived in old Athens, you would often have walked up the slope to that celebrated hilltop. As you entered the beautiful gate and advanced toward the marvelous Parthenon, the first thing of beauty to fill your eye would have been the tall and stately columns all around the temple, throwing their deep shadows against the walls. Next your eye would have caught the bright colors of the sculptured story in the pediment above the columns. As a Greek, you would know at once what all the story in the stone carving meant.

### The Birth of the Goddess Athena

You would have known the tale of how the goddess Athena sprang fully armed from the forehead of Zeus (zūs), the father of the gods. And here you would have seen how Phidias and the sculptors under him had carved her as she stood beside her father, just after her miraculous birth. You would know that it was just at sunrise, for in one corner Helios (hē'li-ŏs), in his fiery chariot, is rising from the sea, while in the other corner the moon goddess with her tired horses is sinking down below the horizon.

There are other gods and goddesses watching the event. That is what you would have seen if you had been a Greek. Now you can see only the battered figures that are left after all the years gone by—figures that have mostly lost their heads, but that stand out as gods and goddesses still. There is no mistaking their majesty.

And no longer are there any stiff joints or awkward gestures or anything whatever out of place or out of shape. There

is only truth to nature, with majesty and calm of the greatest art. The Greek sculptor has now learned every lesson of his craft, and there is nothing that his chisel cannot do—simply, naturally, and boldly—whether in a great group in a pediment or merely

in some small square with only two figures carved on it. Every figure is about as near perfection as it can be, and all the figures go together to compose a group of similar perfection.

When you had stood outside in the sun long enough, you would have wandered in among the columns and looked up at a

long strip of bright color on the wall. Now when the Greeks came to decorate their temple, they were not content to carve out rows of lions, as the Babylonians would have done. They carved people—the people of Athens in their feast-day procession. There are a great many people in the famous frieze (frēz) carved around the Parthenon; for the carving runs all around the building. There are horsemen riding bareback with their cloaks flying. There are the maidens who carry Athena's veil. There are all sorts of people. There are gods, too, seated on their thrones and watching the procession. But with all the crowds of people there is never any jumbling in the picture—never too many heads getting in one another's way, never a muddle of feet tripping over one another.



Photo by Boston Museum of Fine Arts

You may see from this earring that the Greeks wanted everything about them—even the tiniest of their personal ornaments—to be graceful and beautiful.

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## THE HISTORY OF ART

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All is in perfect order—as we may see it now in the British Museum, where the frieze of the Parthenon now rests, the most famous frieze in all the world.

### A Goddess Come to Earth

Next you would have gone into the dim room inside, where the beautiful statue of Athena stood. We have only poor little copies now to tell us of her majesty and beauty. We have to imagine the vast figure of old. The head, arms, and feet were of ivory, the drapery of gleaming gold. She had a helmet and shield of gold, all carved and decorated with colors and precious stones.

The statue of Athena in the Parthenon was the proudest possession of Athens. But there were plenty of artists who were jealous of Phidias when he received such a great commission. They made up a story that he had stolen some of the gold that should have gone into the precious statue. But at the advice of his friend Pericles, Phidias had carefully laid on the gold in such a way that it could be taken off again and weighed. When that was done, the charge fell to the ground.

### The Conspiracy against Phidias

Then these jealous men put their heads together again, and pretty soon there was a story that Phidias had put a picture of himself and his friend Pericles on the golden shield of Athena—which would have been an act of dreadful sacrilege. Sure enough, the people found a bald old man who looked like Phidias, and another who was said to resemble Pericles. And Phidias was driven out of the city or else clapped into prison, where he died. At least we hear no more of him in Athens.

To this mighty fifth century of Greek art we may say farewell at the little temple of Nike on the edge of the Acropolis. Nike is the goddess of Victory. Carved in beauty on the balustrade, she is bending over to loosen her sandal. It is sunset; and there is something a little sad in that very fact. For the great days of Athenian victory are passing. Athenian art will never be quite so majestic again. But the great fifth century

will leave a glow that will never dim as it comes down through all the years to follow.

### The Glory of Greek Sculptors

We can never cease from wondering at the deft hands of the Greek sculptors. How beautifully they could carve hair out of stone, so difficult a thing to do! How marvelously they could turn stone into silken drapery! They could make you feel the bones beneath the flesh, and all the muscles at their work. They knew the truth about these things, and they told the truth. To tell the truth is the first hard thing an artist must do. But the truth is by no means always beautiful, especially the truth about twisting bones and muscles; and the second and still harder thing for the artist is to make the truth look beautiful—to make writhing bone and muscle seem effortless, to make powerful emotion look serene. The Greeks learned how to do that better than any other men who ever lived.

The greatest of their philosophers, Aristotle, told what these artists were doing when he tried to define art. In famous words he said that "All art is an imitation of nature." Remember those words. Remember, too, that Aristotle did not mean that art gives a *copy* of nature. A camera can do that, and the whole trouble with a camera is that it can do no more. The camera always tells the truth, and sometimes the truth is so ugly!

Aristotle meant that all nature is itself trying to be more and more beautiful and perfect—every tree to grow into the finest tree it can be, every man into the noblest man. And art can imitate nature *in this effort at beauty and perfection*; it can do even more; it can outstrip nature in the race toward beauty and perfection. It can, because it is born of the thinking mind of man, aim at the ideal.

That was the aim of all Greek artists in their greatest days, and never before or since have any men come nearer to reaching such an aim. They knew life as it was, they knew the truth; and never forgetting that, they carved and painted life as it *ought* to be—they carved and painted the ideal.



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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 5

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### THE FAMOUS PAINTERS OF OLD GREECE

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

Where we must look for examples of Greek painting, 11-49  
The Greek painters were realistic, 11-50  
Scopas, a sculptor of troubled faces, 11-52  
For whom was the first mausoleum built? 11-53  
How the "Alexander Mosaic" gives a clue to Greek painting, 11-53

How "The Victory of Samothrace" typifies the fourth century, 11-55  
When sculpture ceased to be a sacred art, 11-56  
How "The Laocoön" group marks the end of a period, 11-48  
Why portrait painting dates from the time of Alexander, 11-58

#### *Things to Think About*

How did the early Greek painters get their realistic effects?  
Why did the Greeks become more and more restless in their art?  
What was it that all Roman

copies of Greek art seemed to lack?  
Why did the Hellenistic people descend to ordinary subjects?

#### *Related Material*

Alexander the Great, 12-346-49  
Seven wonders of the world, 5-184-87  
Pompeii, 5-256-60  
Venus (Aphrodite), 14-409, 412

The Colossus of Rhodes, 5-186-87  
Greek painting, 5-158, 12-53  
Mosaics, 12-109-15  
Pottery, 12-43-61

#### *Practical Applications*

Much modern pottery is painted in a manner closely resembling that of the Greeks. The flow-

ing lines of Grecian robes are often used in costume design.

#### *Summary Statement*

Though Greek painting is largely lost, we know that it closely paralleled Greek sculpture in artistic perfection.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



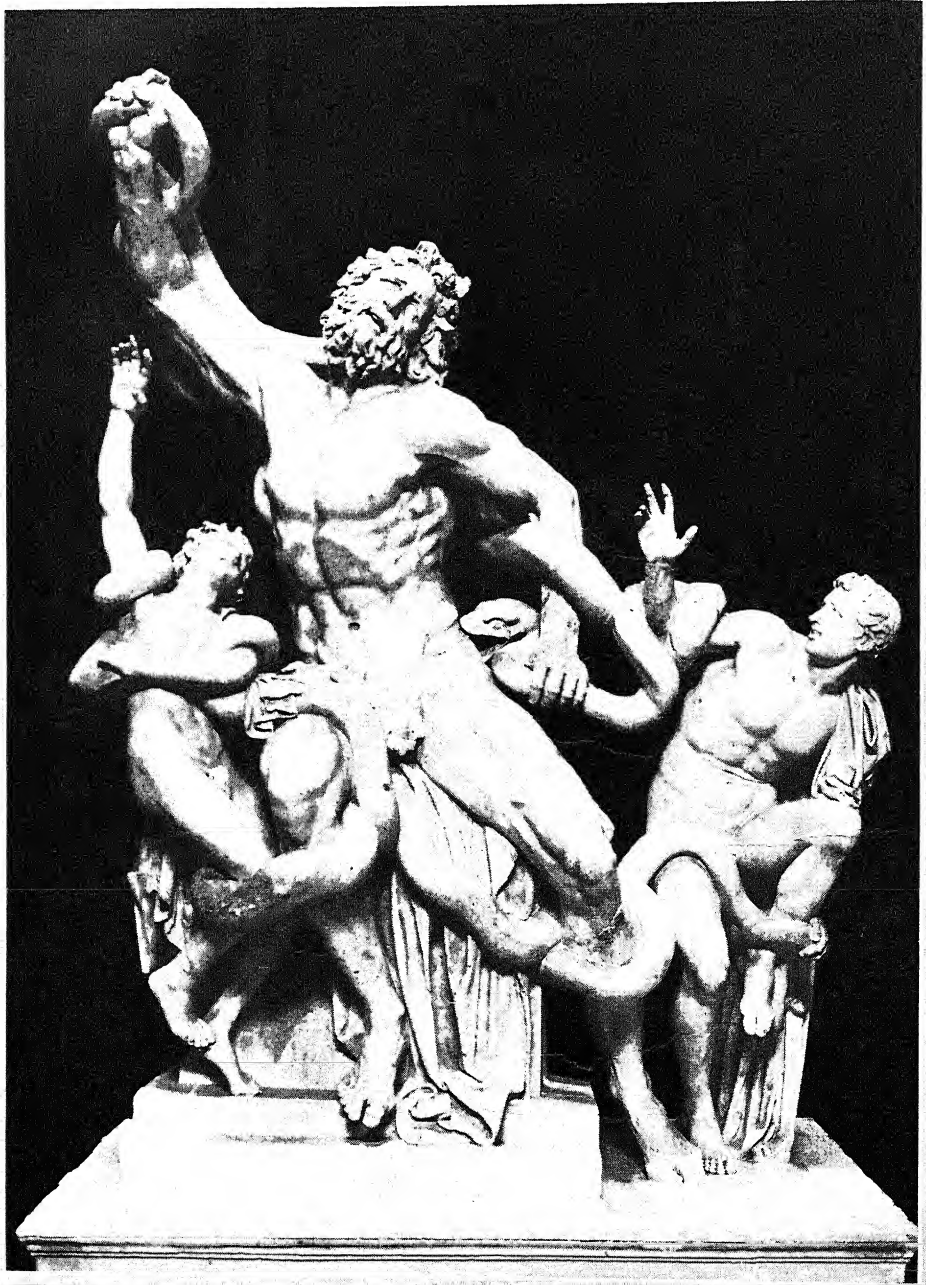


Photo by Chaurouner, Rome

This is the famous Laocoön group which Michelangelo considered the greatest piece of sculpture that had ever been done. We can agree with him that it is a powerful and splendid work and that it must have taken a great deal of skill to make it. But we who, unlike Michelangelo, have seen the sculptures of the

Parthenon and other works of the best period of Greek art, cannot agree with him that it is the greatest piece of sculpture ever made. We miss the restraint, the simplicity, and the aloof, godlike quality of the sculpture of Phidias and his period; and we miss the grace of the statues by Praxiteles.

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Though the great Greek painter Polygnotus probably never painted a vase in his life, it is only from vases like this one—which tells the story of the killing of Niobe's children—that we can get some idea of what the great paintings of Polygnotus must have been like. Instead of a row of people all on the same level—as we always see them on vases before the day of Polygnotus—we now see figures at different levels. Those highest up were really meant to be farthest away. For Greek artists had not yet learned that figures at a distance look smaller than those that are near. So our vase painter made all his figures the same size, hoping that those higher up would look farther away.

Photo by Giraudon, Paris



Even though this and other vases tell us something of the way in which Polygnotus spaced his figures, they can tell us little else about him. For one thing, he did not have so many problems as the vase painter, who could paint only in red and black, with a solid black background. Polygnotus could use a light background, and could make his figures and details stand out from it in various contrasting colors. We are told that he used only four colors: red, yellow, black, and white. But in those he could use various shades, and by mixing them

could have made other colors. A certain kind of black mixed with white would make blue, and blue and yellow would of course make green.

### *The FAMOUS PAINTERS of OLD GREECE*

*Even if Most of Their Great Work Has Long Since Vanished, We Still Have Enough Traces of It Left to Tell Us Their Glory*

**W**HEN we think of art in ancient Greece we have a picture in our minds of white Greek temples and white marble statues. But the Greeks never had white marble statues. Such a statue would not have seemed finished to them, and would have looked very naked. They always painted the statues of their people. They tinted the hair, eyes, and lips, and gave the figures colored draperies with bright borders. The statues are all white for us merely because the color has long ago worn off. For that same reason we have no Greek paintings left at all, though there were plenty of them in the days of Greece.

In a former story we have told about Greek sculpture down to the days of its highest glory. That is easier to talk about, for we have many works of the Greek sculp-

tors left. But we really have to guess at what Greek paintings were like, though we can tell a good deal from the Roman imitations we have of them and from the pictures we find on the Greek vases.

In the great fifth century of Greece there are two famous painters. They worked about the same time with the great sculptors. The first, Polygnotus (pōl'ig-nō'tūs), was most active a little before the time of Phidias—that is, in the days when the sculptor Myron (mī'rōn) was at his height. The second, Zeuxis (zūk'sīs), came a little after Phidias.

Polygnotus must have done for painting just about what Phidias did for sculpture. The great philosopher Aristotle told the young men of Athens to study this man's pictures because he came nearest to painting

## THE HISTORY OF ART

the ideal man. While searching for the ideal, Polygnotus also liked to try new experiments. The vase painters took up his new notions eagerly, and we can get a glimpse from them of what the great paintings of Polygnotus must have been like.

For instance, we can imagine from the things we see on vases what a picture by Polygnotus of Apollo and Artemis (ār'tē-mīs) shooting the children of Niobe (nī'ō-bē) would have been. We can see from the little wavy lines that stand for hills that Apollo and Artemis are up behind the fallen figures and are shooting at a boy on the right, who is running off into the distance. The picture gives only a bare skeleton of a landscape, in a sort of sign language that stands for hills and trees. But it tells a story, and it started people trying to make a flat background look like nature out of doors.

We can see what a difference this made in painting when we look at such pictures as those of the "Knucklebone Players" and of the "Centaur Killing a Tiger." These look like painting as we know it to-day, with

various lights and shades skillfully shown.

Zeuxis, coming at the end of the fifth century B.C., eagerly took up this new kind of painting. He did not care so much for lofty and ideal pictures as for the clever effects

he could get with shading and perspective. There is a story that Zeuxis once drew some grapes which looked so real that the birds came to peck at them. Then another artist painted a curtain so cleverly that Zeuxis asked him to draw the curtain aside to show the picture behind it. When Zeuxis found that the curtain itself was a picture, he gave the other painter the prize. He said he had managed to deceive only the birds, while his friend had deceived no less an artist than himself.

From this time on, the Greek artists were more and more intent on making things look real. Sculptors did wonderful things in turning stone into soft flesh or flowing drapery. When the statue of Hermes (hūr'mēz) with the baby Dionysus (dī'ō-nī'sūs) was dug up not many years ago, a photograph of it was sent to a scholar who was a high authority on old statues. He admired it greatly; but he asked why they had left a cloak hanging on the tree trunk when they took the picture. Of course the cloak was part of the carving, but it looks so lifelike

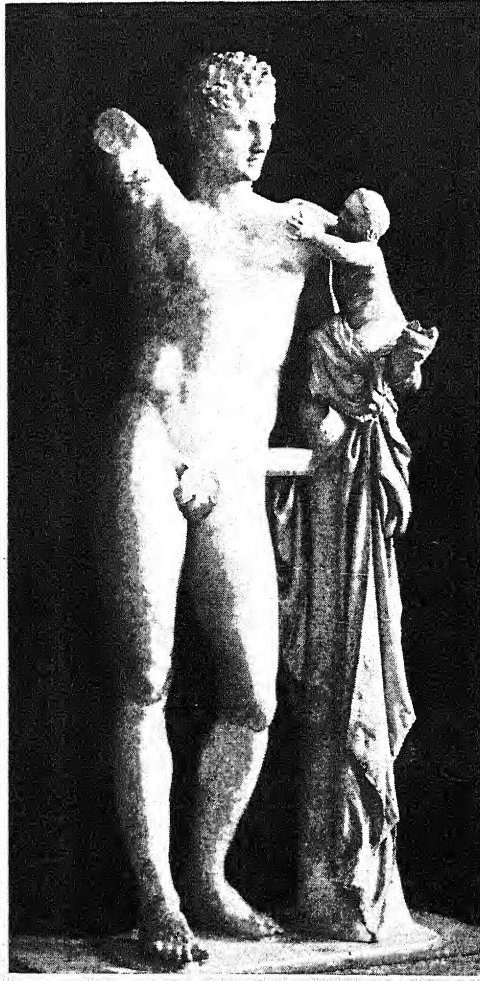


Photo by Alinari

This is the only great masterpiece of Greek sculpture that has come down to us. It is the Hermes of Praxiteles. Ancient writers who were lucky enough to see the other works of Praxiteles evidently considered this statue scarcely worth mentioning. But we who can see the others only in clumsy Roman copies, consider this to be one of the most beautiful works of art of all time.

that the scholar mistook it for real cloth! The Hermes of this statue is a fascinating person. Though his face is carefree, you can see the shadows run across it as you look at him, and he seems to change his



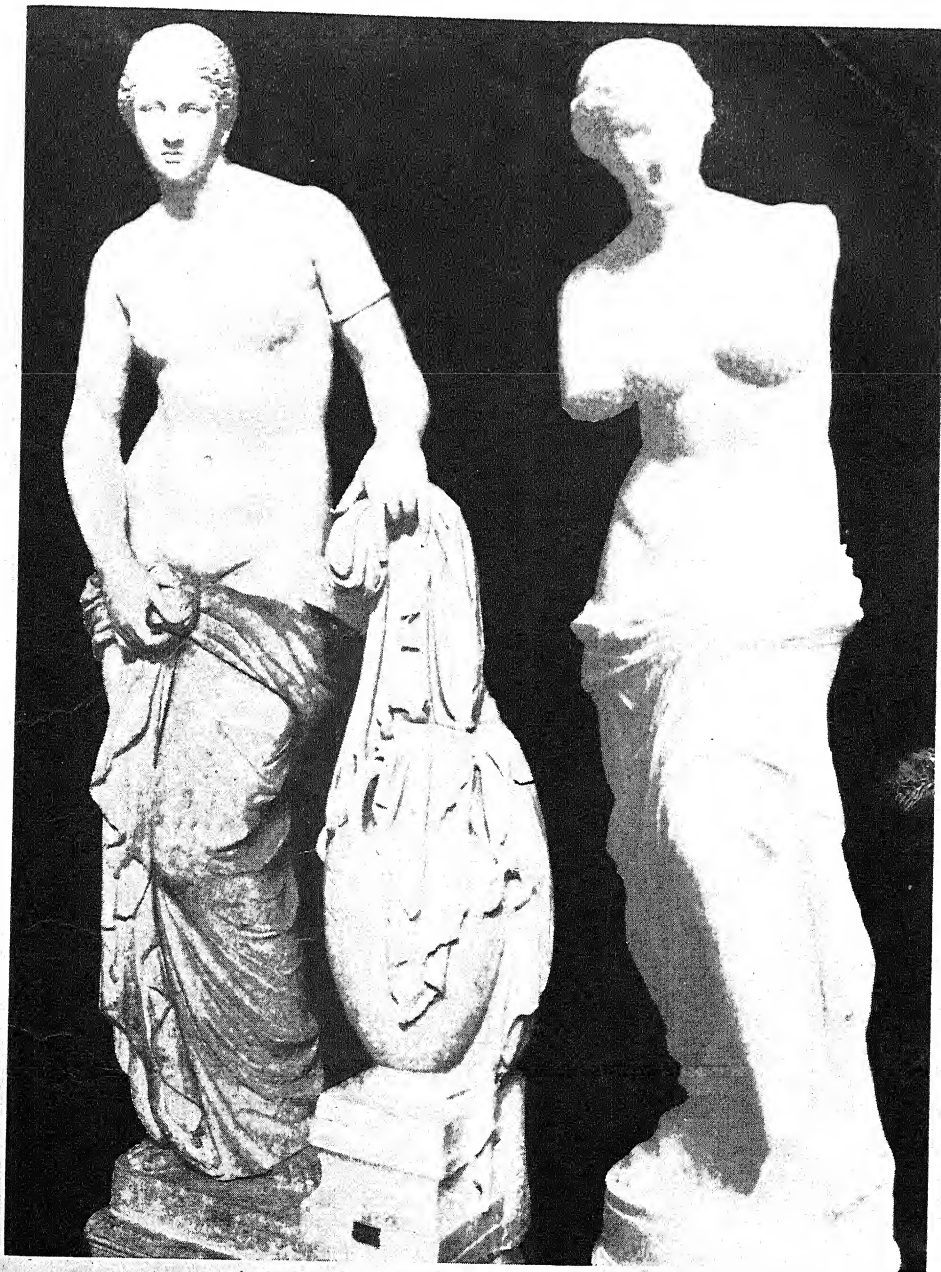


Photo by Chauffourier, Rome

Of Praxiteles' statue of the Aphrodite, or Venus, of Cnidus, which an ancient writer describes as the most beautiful statue in all the world, the Romans made several copies. One of them—not completely nude, as the great sculptor had made the goddess—is shown at the left. Unfortunately we cannot see in it the "happy expression," the "finely-penciled eyebrows," the "melting gaze," and smile which "played gently

about her parted lips," as described by the ancient author. But we know that, since the statue was the most famous of all the sculptures of Praxiteles, it must have been even more beautiful than the Hermes. And in some of the copies the dreamy look, the graceful pose, and soft hair of the original have been preserved. To the right is the famous Aphrodite of Melos—or "Venus de Milo"—probably made in about 250 B.C.





Above are two marble reliefs from the tomb of Mausolus. We know that Scopas worked on the sculptures of this building, and perhaps we can recognize his

hand in some of the friezes where poses are bold and strenuous, where faces show emotion, and where fine workmanship shows the hand of a master.

expression under your eyes. You are never quite sure whether he is happy or sad.

Perhaps the artist of the fourth century, trying to be so real, felt that Phidias had said all there was to say in the realm of the ideal. Then too, Athens and the rest of Greece had begun to lose their power. These were days of war and struggle, and the Greeks could not be so proud and serene any longer. When they made statues of their gods they now tended to give the deities moods more like their own.

The first great sculptor of this fourth century was Praxiteles (prāk-sīt'ī-lēz), who probably carved the Hermes we were just describing. He also carved a beautiful figure of Aphrodite (āf'rō-di'tē), which caused a great stir. This statue was made for the city of Cnidus (nī'dūs) and it was so much admired that the king of Bithynia (bī-thīn'ī-ā) up on the Black Sea offered to pay all the city's debts if he might have the statue. But the people of Cnidus would not part with their Aphrodite, who brought visitors from all over the world just to see her.

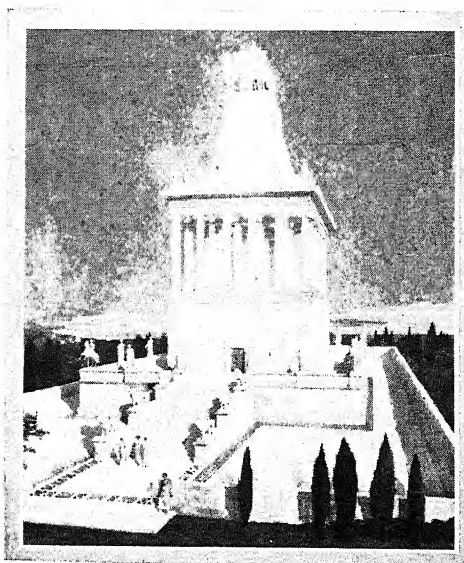
Praxiteles made a famous statue of Cupid bending his bow. They say that the sculptor promised a famous lady named Phryne (frī'nē) any one of his statues that she liked most. Now Phryne was not quite sure which one to choose. In order to find out which

one Praxiteles himself thought the best, she ordered a slave to run into his studio and cry "Fire!" The slave obeyed, and Praxiteles turned first to rescue his Cupid. Then the lady said, "I choose that one, please."

There was another sculptor named Scopas (skō'pās) who carved troubled faces. The hollows of the eyes are so deep as to make black shadows out of which the eyes look very sadly on the world. We have nothing at all that we can be sure is the work of Scopas, but he must have been one of the

leaders in his day, for legends link his name with two of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

One of these wonders, built about 350 B.C., was the temple of Artemis at Ephesus. It was put up to replace an older temple which burned down on the night when Alexander



This is the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus as one scholar has restored it. This tomb, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was built by Artemisia in memory of her husband Mausolus.

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the Great was born. Of this enormous building we have only bits and fragments left now. On a drum that once stood beneath one of the great columns there is carved some beautiful drapery and a Hermes with head thrown back and open mouth; these are certainly fine enough to make us suspect that Scopas did the carving.

The same thing is true of some of the pieces of the Mausoleum (*mô'sô-le'üm*) at Halicarnassus (*hăl'i-kär-näs'üs*). This other wonder was built by Queen Artemisia (*är'të-mish'i-ä*) in memory of her husband Mausolus. It is one of the favorite games among scholars to try to find out from the pieces that are left what the tomb really looked like when it stood in all its glory.

About all we know is that it had a great pyramid built up in steps at the top, and that on the summit of the pyramid stood a huge four-horse chariot and statues of Mausolus and his queen. These are in the British Museum now. They are very different looking people from those we find from the chisels of the fifth century sculptors. Mausolus was a king in Asia Minor—which reminds us that the great works of these later days of

Greek art do not belong strictly to the little peninsula of Greece. Though many of the artists were born in Greece, they could not find work enough at home and had to go over to the prosperous cities of Asia Minor to earn a living. Scopas evidently did that. A frieze from this mausoleum shows quickly-darting figures that look like his work because they are so finely carved and so full of

troubled action. There are many fewer people in this work than in the frieze of the Parthenon, but they are much more active—so active that their clothes are flying all about and filling up the space.



This gallant and spirited horse comes from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus.

In the thirteen brilliant years from 336 B.C. to 323 B.C., Alexander the Great conquered most of the ancient world and renewed the glory of old Greece. Under him the land flourished again, and naturally his court attracted the best artists. The greatest of these were Lysippus (*li-sip'üs*) the sculptor and Apelles (*ä-pël'ëz*) the painter. They must both have made portraits of Alexander himself, but these are

long since lost, with all their other work. Of course the paintings of Apelles are all gone, and there is nothing from the chisel of Lysippus left for us to look at. We have to imagine their work as best we can from the copies of them and from the stories people told about them.

The famous painter Apelles is really no more than a name to us. They say he painted a famous picture of Aphrodite rising from the sea and pressing the sea foam from her dripping hair. He was very famous for his portraits too. How

fascinating it would be to have just one of his paintings of the great Alexander!

We are lucky enough to have found in the Roman city of Pompeii (*pöm-pä'ë*) one fine picture which is certainly a copy of a Greek painting of Alexander's time. The Romans were not quite clever enough to do so fine a thing as this without some Greek painting to copy from. This particular copy



Photo by British Museum

The colossal statues of Mausolus and Artemisia, shown above, were evidently meant to be true portraits of the king and queen.

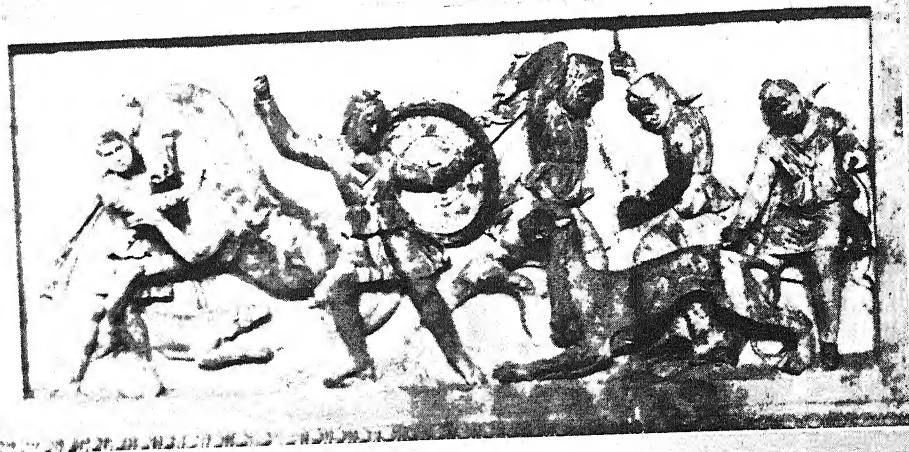


Photo by Gramstorff Bros.

This is a relief from the so-called "Alexander Sarcophagus." Its lively scenes of battles and lion hunts may give us some idea of what Lysippus' "Alexander's Hunt" and others of his famous reliefs, long since

lost, may have been like. This carving is brightly painted. The garments are in various shades of red and brown, blue, yellow, purple, and violet. The flesh and details of the figures are painted, too.

is put together out of thousands of tiny pieces of colored marble laid in plaster to hold them together. Pictures of this kind are called mosaics (mō-zā'ik). The Romans were very fond of such work, and they decorated their floors with it, as we sometimes do to-day.

This work is probably a picture of the great battle of Issus, in which Alexander defeated the Persian hosts. Charging from the left, Alexander has just driven his lance through a Persian nobleman whose horse has fallen. With troubled face, the Persian king Darius stretches out his hand as if to help the wounded man. A second Persian has leaped from his horse and is going to the aid of his comrade. The King's driver is turning his chariot swiftly to the right.

Alexander has lost his helmet in the struggle, and all the many spears seem about to aim

for his bare head. We feel a great crowd of fighters ranging back into the distance. The painter of this scene has put a whole battle on a flat wall.

He has not used very many colors—just black, red, yellow, and white—but he has done some remarkable drawing. Anyone who looks at the way in which the horse of Darius is rearing on its hind legs to keep from trampling the fallen nobleman will read in this splendid picture some part of the story of what Greek painting must have been like in the fourth century.

Lysippus (lī-sīp'ūs) was famous in his day for making thinner figures with smaller heads than those of Polyclitus, figures that seemed taller and more lithe than that of the thickset "Spear Bearer." We

have a well-known statue of a youth scraping himself which may be a copy of a statue by

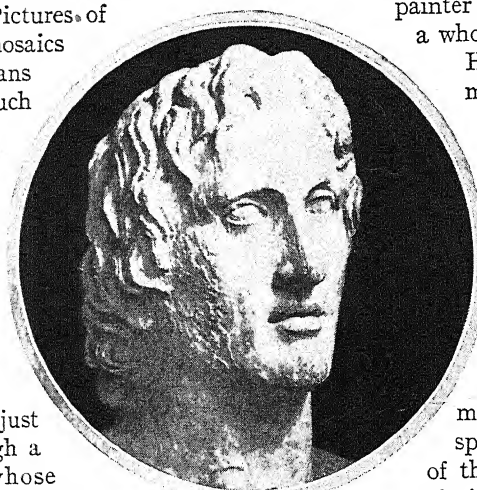


Photo by Alinari

This is a head of Alexander the Great. We know that Lysippus made many portraits of Alexander. We are even told that Alexander would allow no other artist to make pictures of him—in bronze, at least. Perhaps in the many later heads that we can recognize as representing the great conqueror, we can find some trace of the lost portraits by Lysippus.

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Lysippus. We know that Lysippus made a great carving of Alexander leading a hunt. This work contained portraits of certain of the sculptor's friends, said to be marvelous likenesses.

We still have a sarcophagus (sär-köf'ä-gūs)—that is, a case for a coffin—which is called Alexander's because it has a portrait of him on it. It is very interesting, for it has the fine Greek color left after all these years, and is a splendid picture of action. Someone must have admired the great carving of Lysippus so much as to have something like it carved on a tomb.

For every statue that left his studio Lysippus put away a gold piece in a chest. When he died, his heirs found fifteen hundred gold pieces stored away. That is a large number of statues to have made in a lifetime, even with many assistants to help in the work.

The sculptors of this fourth century in Greece liked to carve people in many sorts of violent action. They carved out tall, sinuous figures that leap and plunge. If the calm and stately figures of the Parthenon are typical of the fifth century, the famous Victory of Samothrace (säm'ō-thrās) is typical of the fourth.

When you stand at the bow of a swift boat and watch the white foam rushing away in front of you, you have a feeling of speed and strength and joy that hardly any other

thing can give you. The sculptor of the Victory of Samothrace knew that, and when he made a figure of rejoicing victory he put her on the bow of a ship where the wild wind and spray could beat upon her and blow her cloak against her. She seems to lean forward

eagerly and triumphantly into the gale.

On his conquering way Alexander led his army as far as Northwest India. Then his soldiers rebelled and forced him to return. He died on the way back, at Babylon in 323 B.C., and his empire was split up among his generals. Each of these tried to make his kingdom as splendid as Alexander's empire, and many new cities arose to rival one another. The architects and sculptors and painters hastened to build and beautify these new cities. As Greek art reached over toward the East it took ideas of splendor from the Orient and lost its old simplicity.

One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World belonged to this age following Alexander—the Hellenistic (hēl'ēn-īs'tik) Age. It was the Colossus of Rhodes. This gigantic figure stood for fifty-six years, till it was over-

thrown by an earthquake. But even as it lay prostrate it was still a marvel. Few men could reach around its thumb, and its fingers were larger than most statues. There were huge yawning caverns where the limbs had been broken in falling, and within these

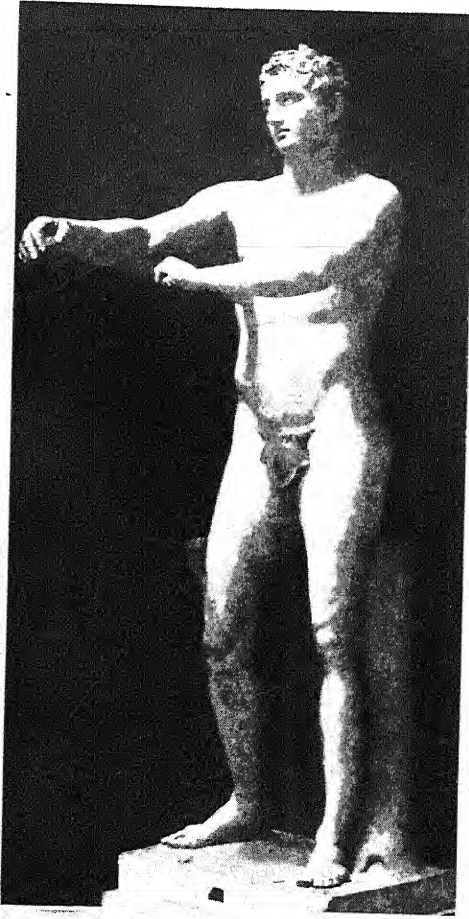


Photo by Alinari

This Roman statue may be a copy of the famous bronze statue of "A Youth Scraping Himself" which we know Lysippus made. The Roman artist who copied the statue—if indeed this is a copy of it—was able to reproduce the slender proportions of the original masterpiece, but not the beauty of detail and the fineness of workmanship which Lysippus was particularly noted for.



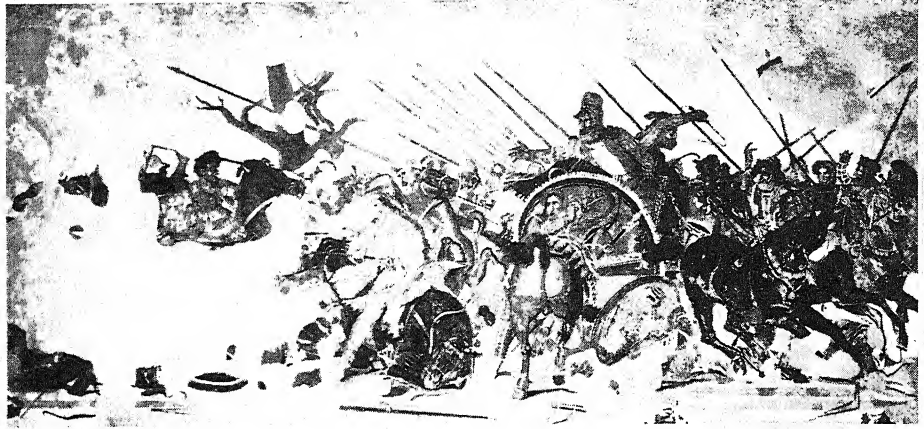


Photo by Alinari

Thousands of tiny bits of colored marble went into the making of this exciting battle scene, which has

been called the "Alexander mosaic." It may well be a copy of a fourth century Greek painting.

could be seen great masses of rock that gave the statue a firm footing when it was standing. The statue was made of bronze, and was weighted inside with the stone to make it stand firmly. We are told that it took twelve years to make the statue.

In these later days of Greece an artist would sometimes look to the time of Phidias and would carve a stately and serene goddess such as the Aphrodite from Melos (mē'lōs); but most of the people were no longer interested in the old ideal art. They preferred rapid and tumultuous scenes of action now, because no one had thought before of putting them into stone, and they seemed newer. Thus the great altar of Zeus

at Pergamon (pūr'gā-mōn), built about a century after the Colossus—that is, about 170 B.C.—contains a seething battle scene

with very lifelike figures writhing in pain.

In a similar way the famous group of Laocoön (lā-ōk'ō-ōn) and his sons being

killed by serpents was a popular piece of work. Phidias would have been shocked to see such mortal things put into immortal stone. But sculpture is not a sacred art any longer. Artists find their models anywhere they please. One will carve a bent old market woman peddling her goods. Others will make all sorts of little figures from daily life—ladies out walking in their best clothes, groups of people gossiping, statues of people dressing, and many other homely things.

So it often is, though not always, in the history of art. The great, majestic works come rather early, when the artists reach their first full maturity. Then these works of genius remain to be the despair of the



Photo by the Louvre

This beautiful statue, the Victory of Samothrace, was set up toward the end of the third century to commemorate a naval victory. The figure stands on the prow of a ship, her wings outspread, and her draperies beaten back by the wind. She is often called the "Winged Victory."

rather early, when the artists reach their first full maturity. Then these works of genius remain to be the despair of the

## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photo by Alinari

Above is the corner of a room in Pompeii. The inhabitants of this pleasure resort of Italy were fond of decorating their walls with landscapes, gardens,

and scenes from mythology and everyday life. Many of their paintings were set in architectural frames of painted columns and moldings.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

In the center is a statue of an old market woman, by a Greek artist. To the right and left are dainty terra

cotta figurines that were once gayly painted. All three were made in the third century B.C.

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artists that follow. And the later artists may all too easily descend to more trivial things, to things that are clever and pretty rather than heroic and beautiful.

In the Hellenistic days painters grew cleverer than ever at making us see distance and rounded solid things on a flat wall. They did not draw with mere lines any more, as the fifth century artists had done. Polygnotus had made the outline of a person so clear and beautiful that the rest of the picture did not matter. One wavy line could stand well enough for a hill. Then, during the fourth century, the painters grew marvelously clever at making daubs with the brush that would turn into hair or eyes or muscles, with all the shadows in just the right places to make a whole person look so solid that you could hardly believe he was only painted. Now, in the Hellenistic Age, the painters play more and more with thick, splashing color, and less line.

A good example may be seen in the picture of Hercules discovering his little son. The light picks out the little boy's figure as he plays on the ground with a fawn. How heavy and strong the figures are! They make us think of the giants on the great altar of Pergamon.

One of the loveliest things we have from this time is a picture of a young girl gathering flowers. The background is a beautiful green, while the girl wears a yellow dress

and a scarf that is such a pale blue as to be almost white. She has turned her head, and we can see only her round, soft cheek.

Then we have a picture—some doves drinking from a bowl—that is enough to remind us of the old story of Zeuxis and his grapes. For if we saw them in color we

might think we were looking at real doves out of a window. There is a mosaic of an "Unswept Dining Room" that seems a sort of joke. We can see a chicken's leg, an empty shell, and even a mouse gnawing at a nut. But what would Phidias have said about it? "What a silly waste of an artist's time to paint a thing like this!"

The Hellenistic people were eager to paint almost anything—even down to messy little things of daily life—and they certainly had the knack of making such subjects look real. But the best things the Hellenistic artists did are their portraits and their landscapes. Portrait painting

dates at least from the time of Alexander, but in its early days only a few great people had their portraits made. Now it was a common thing to see portraits of ordinary people. And very fine these portraits were. Many that we have left were done for Greeks and Romans in Egypt, who imitated the Egyptian burial rites and had their portraits painted to put on their coffins. Landscape painting too now came into existence—to please people shut up in great cities.



Photo by Alinari

This painting, called "Flora," was found near Pompeii. In color it is one of the loveliest things imaginable. Someone has said that "it is woven of morning vapor and clear sunlight." Even in a photograph we can see how charmingly the wind-blown draperies flutter in the breeze, and how gracefully the goddess turns to pluck a flower.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

### No. 6

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## WHAT THE ROMANS THOUGHT BEAUTIFUL

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| How the Romans came to be the first art collectors, 11-61             | reel of film, 11-65   |
| What the Romans inherited from the Etruscans, 11-62                   | Why the sculptors had to make faces as real as wax masks, 11-69       |
| How their conquerors and engineers left monuments far and wide, 11-62 | Why the Romans painted their walls to look like gardens, 11-71        |
| Why the Romans erected their famed arches, 11-64                      | The difference between the Greek and Roman way of doing things, 11-71 |
| Why the Trajan column is like a                                       |   |

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| Roman bronze work, 12-14-17     | Romanesque architecture in America, 11-512, 515 |
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### *Practical Applications*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| The building of aqueducts, the Roman arch, and the realistic sculpture of faces are gifts | from the Romans and are greatly valued to-day. |
|---|--|

### *Leisure-time Activities*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Build a model of a small section of a Roman aqueduct, 11-63 | Apollo, 11-65  |
| Try to find in the museum or elsewhere statues of Venus and | Draw a copy of the head of the emperor Trajan, 11-60 |

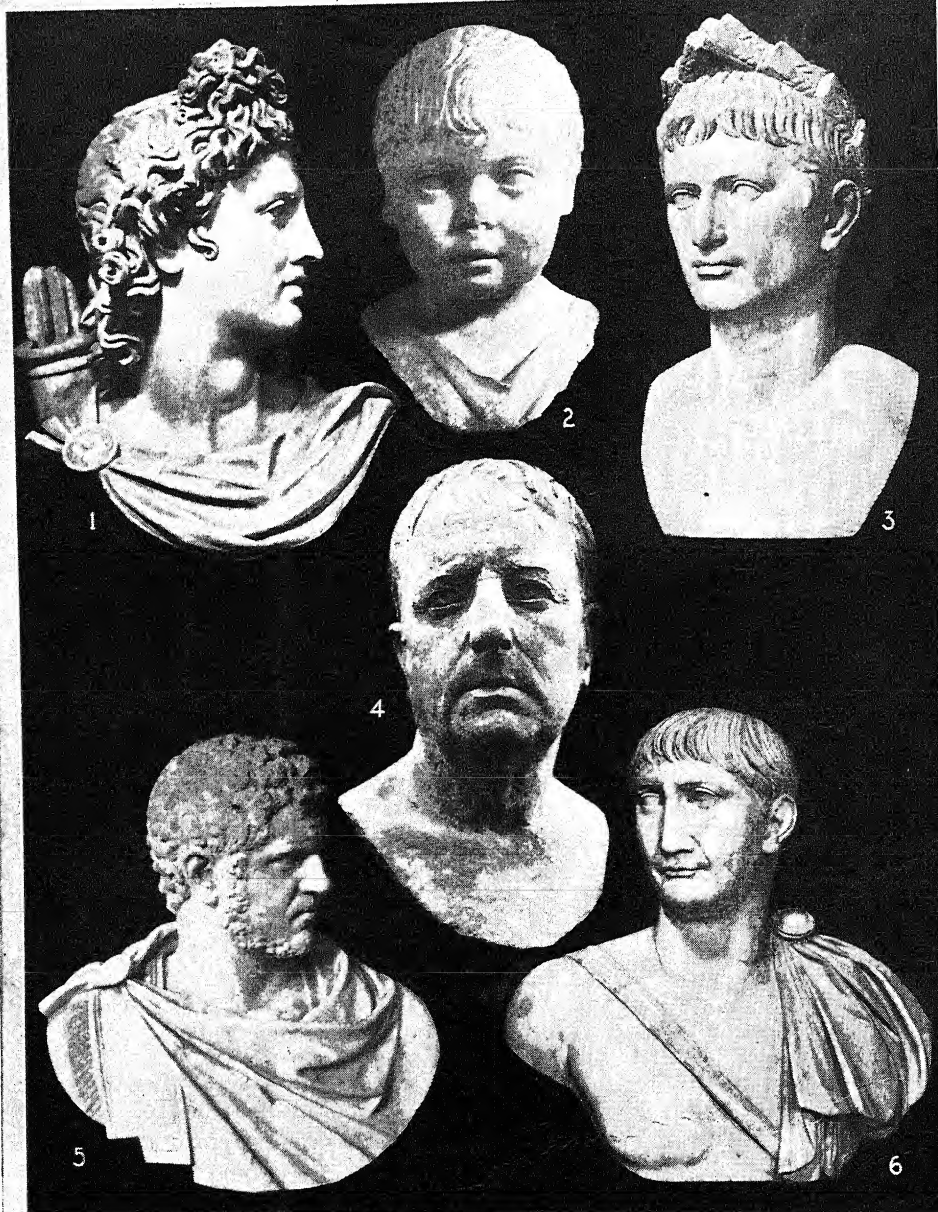
### *Summary Statement*

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|---|--|
| Greek art and Roman art are easily confused, though they are really very different. Whereas the Greeks strove for simplicity and perfection, the Romans | wanted majesty and grandeur. The Romans were the first engineers of any importance, and their taste in art reflects this fact. |
|---|--|

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Alinari, and Boeton Museum of Fine Arts

No. 1. Head of the Apollo Belvedere, an idealized type which the Romans took over from the Greeks and tried to imitate. The Romans did far more artistic work when they took real people as their models, as you can see from the fine Roman portraits on this page. No. 2. A Roman child. No. 4. Portrait of a Roman. This fine head and the head of the child are both so real and human that they might easily be taken for people living to-day. No. 3. Bust

of Augustus. This great emperor is always idealized in art, partly because he was an emperor and partly because art in his time was particularly under Greek influence. No. 5. Portrait of Caracalla. We are not surprised to hear that this glowering and sullen emperor did away with his own brother. No. 6. Portrait of Trajan, whose strong, homely face tells us plainly that this emperor was a straightforward soldier of simple habits and shrewd common sense.

## WHAT the ROMANS THOUGHT BEAUTIFUL

*Captains and Conquerors, Builders of Palaces and Builders of Empire, What Would They Love in the Fine Arts?*

**N**EARLY all we know about the glory of Greek painting, and a great deal that we know about the glory of Greek sculpture, comes to us from Roman copies of Greek works. The Romans were, above all else, soldiers and rulers, and by no means such great artists as the Greeks; but they seldom missed a good thing when they saw it. After they conquered Greece they never got over their awe and wonder at the things they found there.

They brought as many of them to Rome as they could—books and pictures and statues, and even authors or artists.

In Rome it became the fashion to copy Greek things.

The wealthy men there imported Greek statues or had copies of them made to set up around their houses. To the Greeks art had been a thing to practice first of all, while with the Romans it became a thing to talk about a great deal. The

Greeks of the great fifth century had made every statue for a special purpose—to go on some memorial or in some special place in a certain temple. The Romans took to setting up statues as decorations around their houses. They were the first art collectors, and they started the trade in antiques.

But however much they admired the Greeks, the Romans had other things that they always put ahead of mere art. The vast Roman empire had its own high aims and ideals, as we may see if we travel at this day through the lands that Rome once ruled.

In that part of the present land of France which was earliest and longest Roman, and which is still called "Provence" (prô'-vônNs)—that is, "the Province"—there is a road that takes you high up along the banks of the river Gard (gâr). There you turn a corner rather suddenly and come upon some vast arches towering over the deep ravine of the stream. There are three tiers of them, one on top of another,

This handsome monument is the arch of Titus. Because it is so simple and so stately in its proportions it is considered one of the finest triumphal arches the Romans ever built. Beyond it lie the ruins of the Colosseum.



Photo by Chauffourier, Rome



Photo by Alinari

In telling of Roman art we must not forget to mention the Etruscans, those strange people who came to Italy from no one knows where, long before Rome was founded. Centuries later they were absorbed by the great Roman state. The Romans borrowed from them many of their clever ways of doing things. The greatest art the Romans ever produced, the art of making portraits, was inherited from the Etruscans. The

Romans changed this inherited art to suit themselves, for Etruscan portraits were a little too near the truth even for the truth-loving Romans. So they mixed a little Greek idealism with it. Roman portraits might have gone the way of Greek art as other Roman arts did if the Romans had not wanted truthful portraits of their ancestors. Above is an Etruscan portrait carved upon a burial urn.

and they seem to span the river in great bounding leaps. It is wild country all around, for there are no houses near, even to-day. It was a savage wilderness in the days when the Romans came there to build their lovely bridge for carrying water to the city of Nimes.

Far over in the west of England, in the city of Bath, is a pool made by the Romans and still lined with Roman lead. It holds the mineral water from a great spring which the Romans tapped and which is still in use to-day. This pool is now what remains of the great Roman swimming baths and of the clubhouse which they built over the spring.

At Segovia (sā-gō'vyä), in Spain, another Roman aqueduct stands like a giant looking down upon the houses of the town. Many a mile away, at Baalbek, in Syria, is an enormous temple with some of the mightiest col-

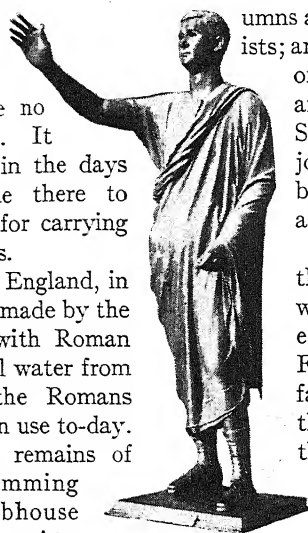


Photo by Alinari

This is one of the masterpieces of later Etruscan art, the portrait of an orator. It is an amazingly lifelike figure. The artist did not try to make a god or hero of his man, but simply made him as he must have looked—rather homely and a bit awkward.

umns and capitals ever cut by Roman artists; and at Antioch, in what is now the land of Turkey, is a great Roman triumphal arch. In the desert between the Red Sea and the Nile, the end of each day's journey brings you to a Roman camp built to provide shelter for Roman caravans journeying to and from the East. Now if you look on the map for all the places we have mentioned, you will see how far and wide the ancient empire of Rome had flung its banners. From every one of those places the famous Roman roads led straight over the hills to the center of the empire—the Rome that is called "the Eternal City."

What kind of people would give birth to such an empire? A mighty people who were first of all great builders: builders of temples and cities, of roads for trade and armies, of colonies, of law and order. The interest of the Roman lay in making things work—making a great empire



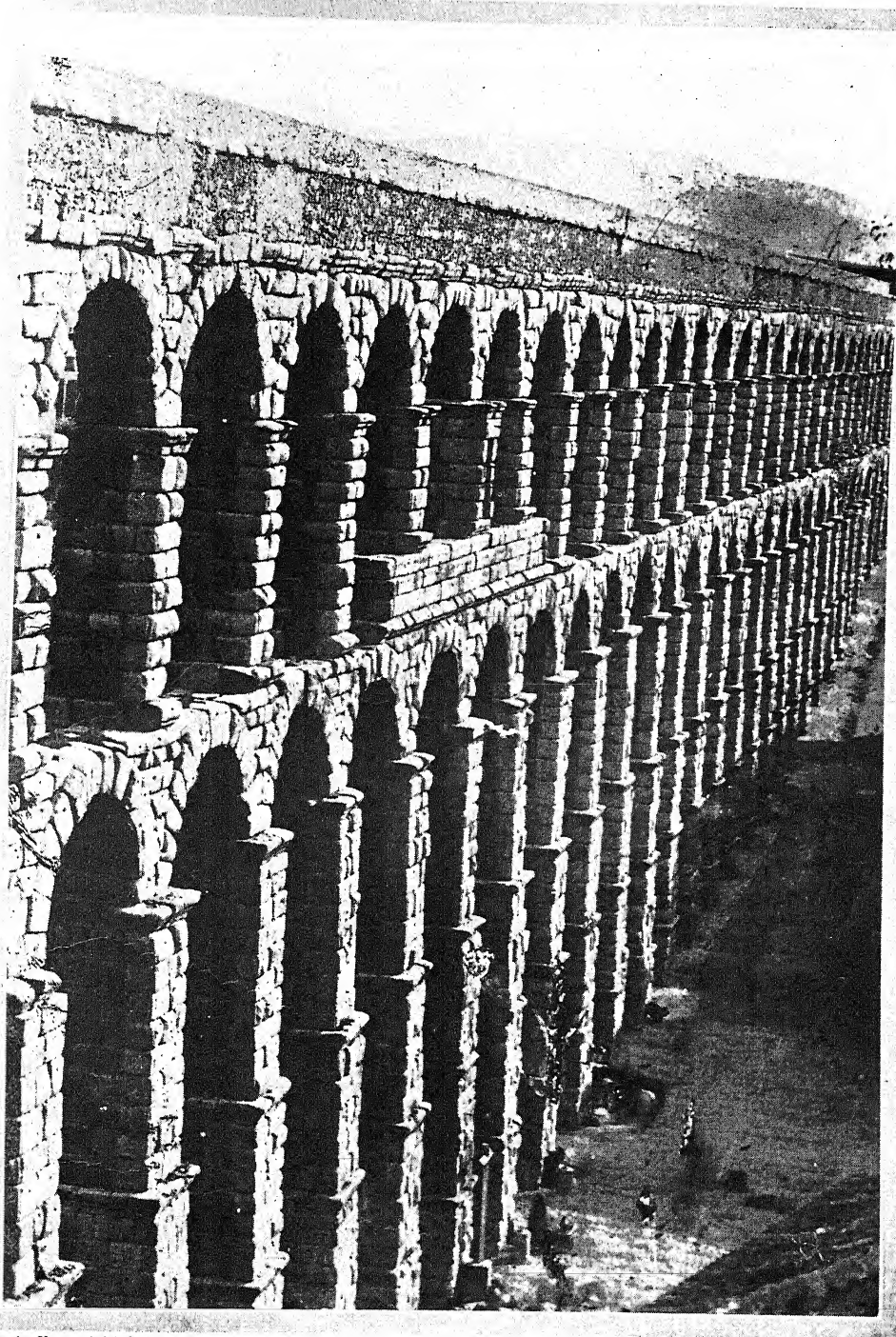


Photo by Vernacci, Madrid

This colossal aqueduct, built at Segovia in Spain, probably in the time of Trajan, is made of rough-

hewn stones cleverly fitted together and uncemented. Old as it is, it is in use to-day.



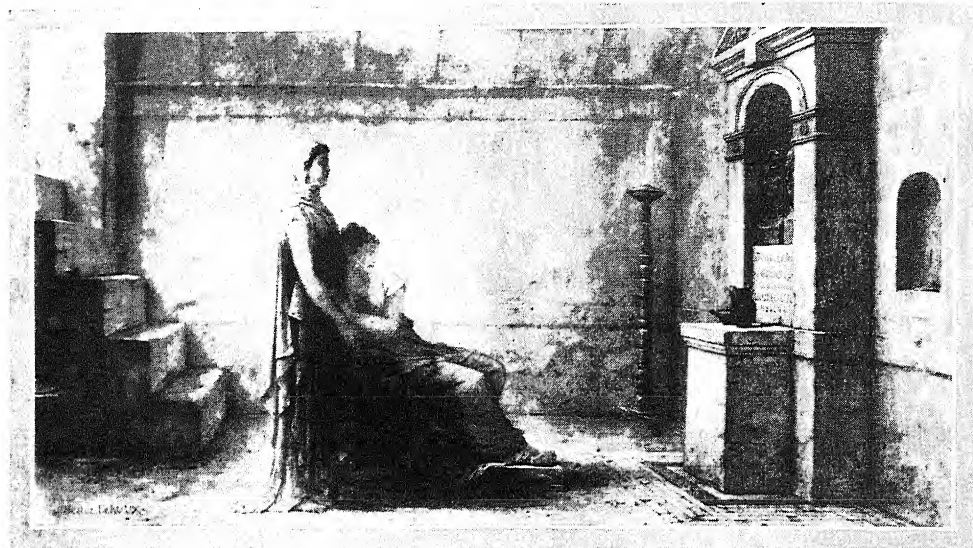


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

These Roman ladies have come to the family tomb to do reverence to the spirits of their ancestors. To

the Romans the family was all-important—and the family included the dead as well as the living.

work and making a drain work. Aqueducts, baths, roads, camps, government—the little things and the big ones—were all cared for with great efficiency. Romans were proud to think that wherever the Roman army went it brought order and cleanliness and comfort to backward peoples—and most of all the great privilege of becoming a part of Rome.

#### How the Romans Carved History in Stone

They felt a vast pride in their great empire, in all the men who had built it, and in all the deeds that had been done to serve it. A Roman general coming home from victories far away wanted to set before the people a record of just what he had accomplished. Each family remembered proudly what the members of their tribe had done, and especially the great deeds of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, who had laid the foundations of Rome's greatness.

In this way the Romans wanted their art to do something which it could not copy from the art of Greece. They wanted family portraits, and records of great deeds. They wanted a history of Rome in statues and pictures.

So they carved their history in stone. It was their own story, and they carved it in their own way, though they could never

wholly forget the Greek ways of doing things.

Thus the Altar of Peace which was set up in 13 A.D. to commemorate the victories of the emperor Augustus in Spain and Gaul has a procession of people like that of the famous Parthenon frieze (frēz) in Athens. The procession does not move along so smoothly, to be sure, as the Greek one. The people are standing together in a deep crowd, and whole families are to be seen. For this is no procession of ideal figures, but of real persons. Always very fond of their children, the Romans have put children in the procession too, right in the front row, with togas like those of their fathers.

#### The Celebrated Arch of Titus

One of the favorite ways of telling the story of Rome was to set up a great arch to celebrate a famous victory. Usually such an arch was placed along the road taken by the victorious army when it came back to Rome. Thus the celebrated arch of Titus was set up in honor of the capture of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by the young prince Titus.

Evidently everyone was proud to see so young a man lead an army to victory, and Titus was a popular hero. The artist who carved the reliefs on the arch put all his admiration of the hero into his work. The

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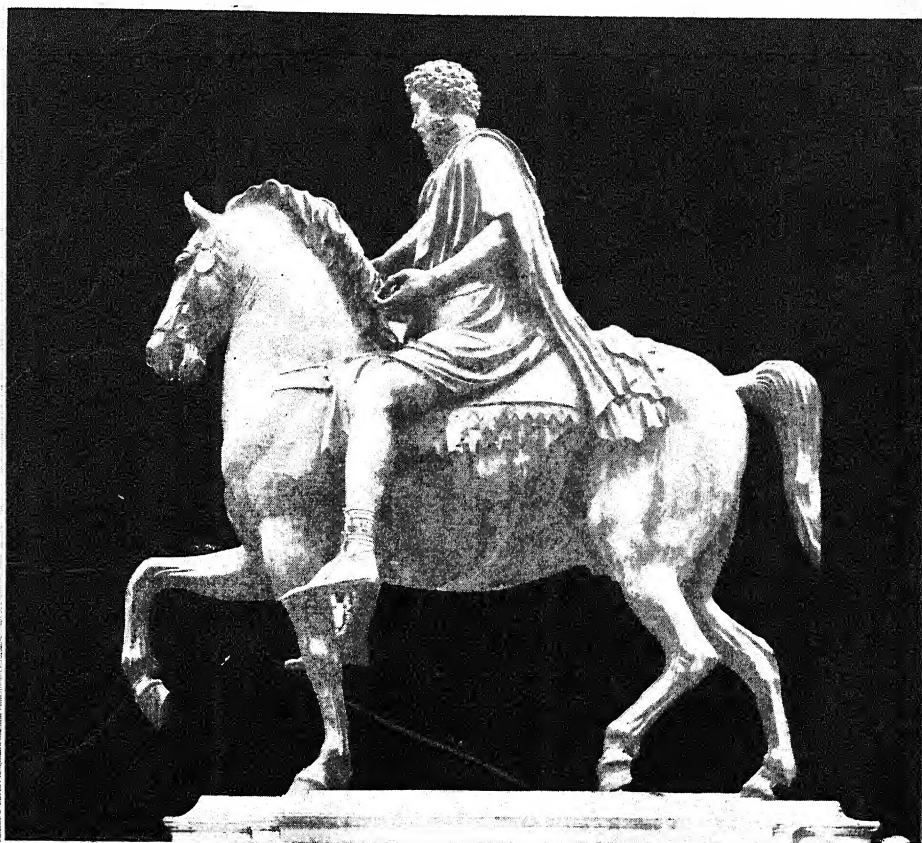
## THE HISTORY OF ART

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This Roman sarcophagus tells us a great deal about Roman art. It is really Greek art transformed—not early Greek art, but the art which appeared after the conquests of Alexander. It was fond of crowded re-

liefs full of strenuous movement. Some of the figures are Greek types. The figure on the right, for instance, reminds us of Olympian Zeus. Others are but slightly idealized portraits.

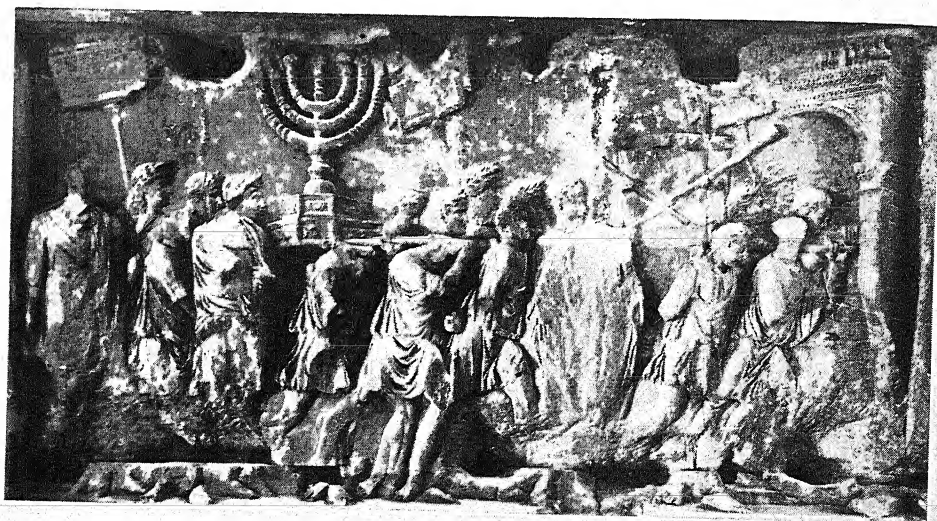


Photos by Alinari

This famous statue of Marcus Aurelius stands on the Capitoline Hill in Rome—a fine and imposing monument to a kindly emperor who spent his life studying philosophy and working for the welfare of the Roman

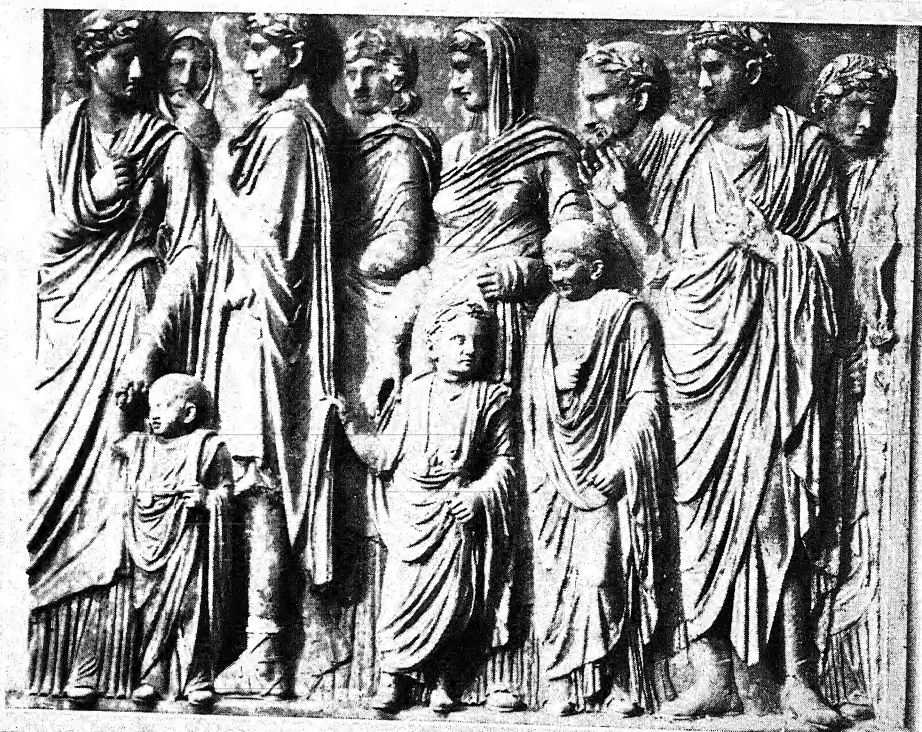
people. From this statue and from coins we can recognize several other portraits of the “good emperor”; all show him with curly hair and curly beard, raised eyebrows and rather prominent eyes.

## THE HISTORY OF ART



This famous relief comes from the arch of Titus and shows part of the triumphal procession of that young emperor. Servants marching before his chariot carry

spoils—among them the seven-branched candlestick of gold from the great Temple at Jerusalem. The relief is full of life and movement.



Photos by Alinari

This slab comes from the Altar of Peace, which was set up in the Field of Mars in Rome to honor Augustus for his many deeds in bringing about peace. Greek

art inspired this stately procession, but the individuals are not idealized. They are real people—members of the Emperor's family.



## THE HISTORY OF ART

winds up the column, running a little like a reel of moving-picture film, and showing one action after another, with Trajan himself appearing in each new action. The carvers of the columns did not care much about making a beautiful design. What they wanted was real history, with all the little details they could show. Instead of a plain background they showed camps and forts, buildings and trees. Some of the heads are very finely carved, like that of Trajan with his son Hadrian behind him.

Some of the people on these carvings have wonderfully interesting faces. The Romans loved to make good likenesses and they really left us the faces of their builders of empire. The Roman emperors always had their portraits carved to leave behind them as a record of their glory. Augustus, first of the emperors, stands with his staff of office in his left hand and holds out his right hand with a kingly gesture as if he would always rule and guide his people. A coin of the time of Trajan

shows this emperor as a strong and fearless general, very different in figure from any likeness ever carved by the gracious and thoughtful

Greeks. The emperor Marcus Aurelius sits on horseback. It gives one a stately air to be carved sitting proudly on a horse. But Marcus Aurelius was a gentle man, and his horse looks more fiery than he.

And the emperors were not the only people to have their portraits made. Each good Roman family had a room where it put the wax masks of the family ancestors. The place was like a portrait gallery, where the

family gathered daily to do homage to the spirits of their dead. Now nothing could be more exact than a mask made right on a man's face; and when an artist carved any other portrait of the same man, the family expected a precise likeness, because they had the features of the man so clearly before them. So the sculptors did their best to make their people look real. Roman portrait sculpture is very interesting for that

reason. It shows us the very image of the men who built up the Eternal City and its empire, though it does not lead us into the realms of ideal beauty, where the great Greek statues take us.

The portrait statues are usually single heads. In the "Portrait of an Unknown Roman," we may see the kind of man who sat in the Roman senate or drew up the laws of Rome. In another we see a soldier with the set jaw of a man of action. The Roman sculptors

even took to noticing ugly features very carefully—the last thing that the greater Greeks would have dreamed of copying—and in the later days of Rome the sharp eyes of the artists did not spare even the Roman emperors. The portrait of Caracalla is dark and sullen, with an evil

twist in the mouth that makes you glad you are not his enemy.

The Romans learned their painting from the Greeks,

but their paintings, like their sculpture, served the Roman empire. There were paintings of the great deeds of Roman history, just as there were carvings of them. There was many a picture of victorious generals. Just because the picture showed a real man, and because the Romans wanted the whole story of their annals to be right, the artist had to take great care with the whole scene. He had to put the trees and



Photo by Chaffourier, Rome

Boethus, a Greek sculptor of the second century B.C., once made a statue of a boy and a goose. The famous statue above may well be a copy of it. It is a charming group, but only a sculptor of this late period would have chosen so trivial a subject for a statue.

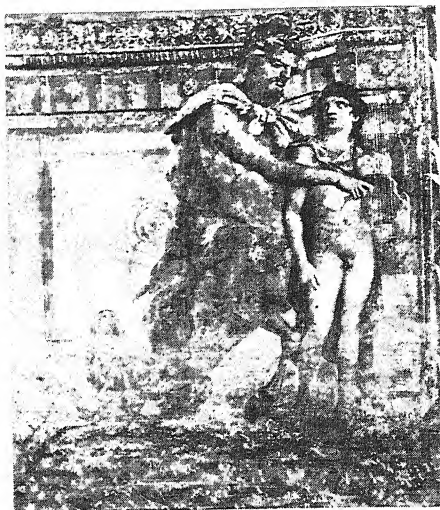


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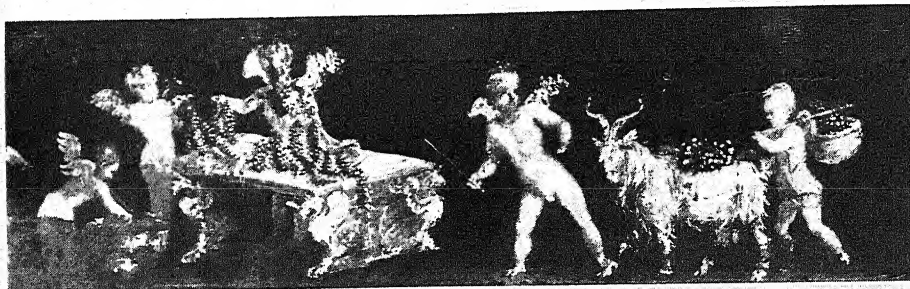


Photos by Alinari

To the left above is a Pompeian copy of a painting of Perseus and Andromeda by Nicias of Athens, who lived at the time of Praxiteles. He is said to have



Painted many of that famous sculptor's statues. To the right above is a Pompeian painting which shows the young Achilles learning to read.



In the House of the Vettii at Pompeii are long friezes only a few inches high showing tiny cupids very

strenuously occupied with important duties. Above they are selling fragrant garlands of flowers.

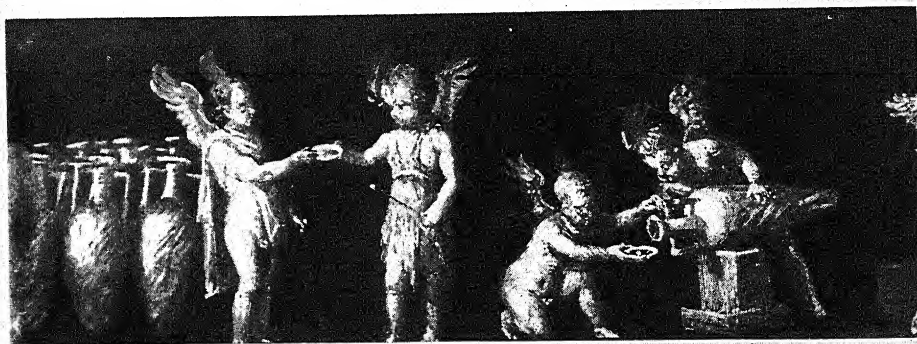


Photo by Chauffourier, Rome

Others of the little cupids are making wine, selling oil, and working gold with anvil, hammer, and bellows—doing all the things the Pompeians must have

done themselves. Others are engaged in chariot racing, and still others drive crabs and dolphins through the shimmering waves.

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hills in the right places, and show what the town really looked like. No ideal or symbolic town or tree would do. These Roman paintings had to be as much like photographs as possible. The general might come to look at the picture and say, "That hill is too far to the right. I stood right by it, and I could see the town gate from where I stood. You must do that over." The Greeks had never cared much whether the geography was right, if only it made a beautiful picture. The Romans wanted the facts in the case, even if they had to give up some of the beauty of the scene.

The Romans of the better class lived pleasant lives in their pleasant houses. The rooms were all built around a courtyard. Instead of having windows on the outside, the rooms got light and air from the courtyard. That left a good deal of smooth wall, and the Romans decorated it with painting. Sometimes they copied Greek paintings, and sometimes they painted "make-believe" windows and columns. Sometimes they put in little figures, such as one of Cupid riding on a crab. These paintings, which often were playful, were done in very bright color, usually with a red background, for the rooms were dark—their only light came through the door to the courtyard.

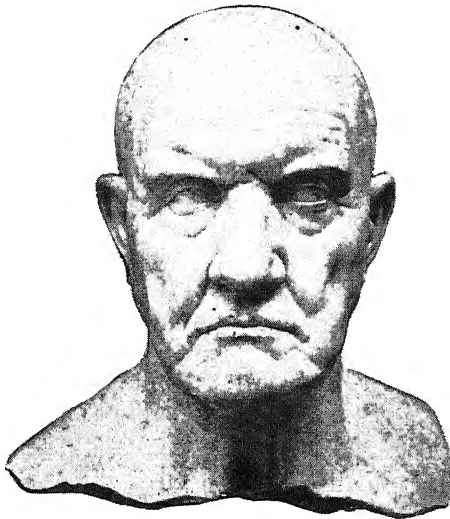
Of course the pictures were not all playful.

Sometimes they contained no figures at all. The wall would just be painted away, and a person in the room would find himself apparently in a lovely garden, possibly with fountains in front, and with trees with birds in them beyond. These would be done so cleverly that one could hardly believe it was nothing but color on a flat wall.

The Romans were very fond of landscape painting. It made their rooms seem spacious and restful, and it gave the artist a chance to show how clever he was at making one see the distance. There are many fascinating pictures from the stories of the Greek mythology, placed in dreamy Italian landscapes. There is Ulysses visiting the Underworld, for instance. And there are pictures of the beautiful harbor of Naples, and of the Roman warships, which look remarkably solid and real.

Greek art and Roman art lie so close together that it is easy to confuse them. But in reality the Greeks and the Romans liked very different ways of doing things. The Greeks strove for simplicity and perfection. The Romans liked majesty, and also production on a grand scale. The Greeks liked ideal people, while the Romans liked the people they knew. Each kind of art has its own virtue, but there can be no doubt which is the higher kind.

This fine portrait in marble was made by a Roman artist of the first century. His work is full of power and truth to life.



If the dour old Roman whose face we see here were to come to life again, we should certainly be able to recognize him from this portrait.

Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

### No. 7

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## THE CRADLE OF CHRISTIAN ART

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

### *Interesting Facts Explained*

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|--|--|
| What followed the decline of the Roman empire? 11-74                             | Where the name "Byzantine" comes from, 11-78                           |
| Why the early Christians had to depend upon borrowed symbols, 11-74              | The Byzantine love of gold, 11-79                                      |
| How the first Christian churches were put together from salvaged material, 11-75 | What happened when Justinian brought the East and West together, 11-81 |
| Why the early Christians turned to mosaics, 11-77                                | Why Byzantine art lingered for so long, 11-81                          |

### *Things to Think About*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| How did the fact that the early Christians lived and worshiped in fear affect the development of their art? | and materials to do with the development of a new art?                      |
| What had the lack of education  | How did Oriental influences affect the Roman art adopted by the Christians? |

### *Related Material*

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|--|--|
| Persecution and martyrdom of Christians in ancient Rome, 5-273-274 | 5-405. He builds Santa Sophia, 11-446                |
| Christ brought before Pilate, 5-132                                | The decline and fall of the Roman empire, 5-245, 254 |
| The Byzantine empire, 5-287-289                                    | The history of the Jews, 5-117-29                    |
| Justinian I, Byzantine emperor,                                    | Goths in the Byzantine empire, 5-289                 |

### *Practical Applications*

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| There is a peculiar charm about the crudity and stiffness, coupled with sincere feelings, that is found in early Christian art. |
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### *Summary Statement*

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|--|
| With the breaking up of the Roman empire, art came to a standstill until its painful revival with the growth of Christianity. Then came a new realization of its usefulness. Working in the greatest poverty, the first Christian artists strove for beauty and meaning, and finally attained it in a new art. |
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*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

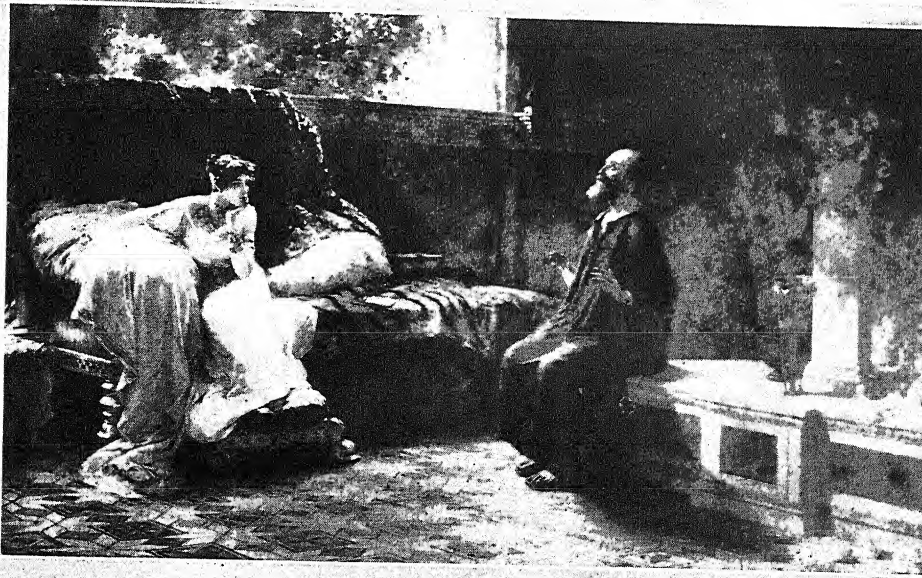


Photo by Chauffourier. Rome

Little by little, Christianity began to spread over the Roman world. Starting with a handful of faithful men who had known and loved Christ, it grew rapidly into

a great organization, and the noble as well as the humbler classes came into its fold. Above is the apostle Paul preaching to a Roman lady.

## The CRADLE of CHRISTIAN ART

*Even When They Were Driven to Worship in Fear under the Ground, the Early Christians Were Starting a Fine Art That Would One Day Be the Glory of Their Churches All over Europe*

**N**EVER has the world seen greater works of art than those given to it by the ancient Greeks. In fact, there are many men who think that in all the years since their time we have never again risen to a height so lofty as that of the best among the great Greek artists.

It was the Romans who carried some form of Greek art through all the stretches of their vast empire, covering nearly all the known world. Of course the Romans were different enough from the Greeks, and they made something very different of the art they learned from Greece; but their craftsmen spread the Greek and Roman art all through the world. In one of our former stories we have told how they did this.

Then, after many a century, the vast

Roman empire died. It simply decayed, and broke up into pieces; and a thousand more years were to pass before a new set of nations was to rise out of the ruins and grow into the ones we know to-day.

What happened to the art of the world when the great empire fell apart? That is the story we must now begin to tell.

The Roman empire first split into two great parts, the Eastern and the Western empires. The Eastern empire went on its way for another thousand years and more, down to 1453; and as we shall see, it developed a great new art all its own.

The Western empire died in the year 476. At least that is the date we always put down in our histories, but of course we know that no such structure ever topples on a given



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day. It had been crumbling long before; and yet its power over the mind of man, in the arts as in all other things, lasted for a long time afterward. This empire remained the biggest thing that had ever come to pass in history; and what really happened was that for many a long year the influence of Rome went right on as the main influence in the world. This was as true in the arts as in any other work of man. With whatever changes might come, Roman art remained the standard for the Western world.

Yet the peace and order of the Roman rule did slowly die, and for some four hundred years there followed a disorganized scramble of new peoples for power. In those years few men had very much time to think about the fine arts. When they did do any work in art, they naturally took the easiest way—they copied from the Romans. And the more ignorant and more confused they were, the worse became their copies.

But there was one new thing in that decaying world which was slowly to build up a new system on the ruins of the old one, and a new art with it. The little flame of the Christian religion was slowly brightening into a great light that would finally dim the old pagan ways. And we must now tell the story of the art that came with this new religion—the story of early Christian art.

At first the Christians were so poor and so despised that they had to meet in secret. When they wanted a tombstone or an altar they simply took some old Roman carving

and put it to their use. The figure of a shepherd carrying a lamb had often appeared in Greek and Roman pictures, and the Christians copied that figure for the picture of their Good Shepherd, the Saviour of the world.

The figure of the peacock had been a Roman symbol (sím'böl), or emblem, for immortality, and the Christians adopted it as a beautiful ornament for their tombs. They found such symbols very useful; the symbols could stand for things that were very hard indeed to show in pictures. The early Christians were so poor that they could have no fine carving, but they made up a simple language of symbols for their pictures, which told a great deal to those who could understand. Many of these symbols have come right down to our time, and are now to be seen in churches everywhere. For instance, the early Christians made much of the first letters in the Greek words which meant "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." Those first letters in Greek are ΙΧΘΥΣ, and put together in this way they spell the Greek word for "fish." Thus the picture of a fish came to be a symbol for the Saviour, and so remains in many a cathedral to our day. It was

easy to carve or paint a fish, and every good Christian knew what it meant. And so it was with various other symbols, which were gradually forming something new in art.

When their days of persecution were over, in the fourth century, the Christians could come out of hiding and begin to build their



Photo by Alinari

This statue of the Good Shepherd belongs to early Christian times. The figure of a shepherd carrying a lamb had often appeared in Greek and Roman art, and the Christians copied that figure for the picture of their Good Shepherd, the Saviour of the world.

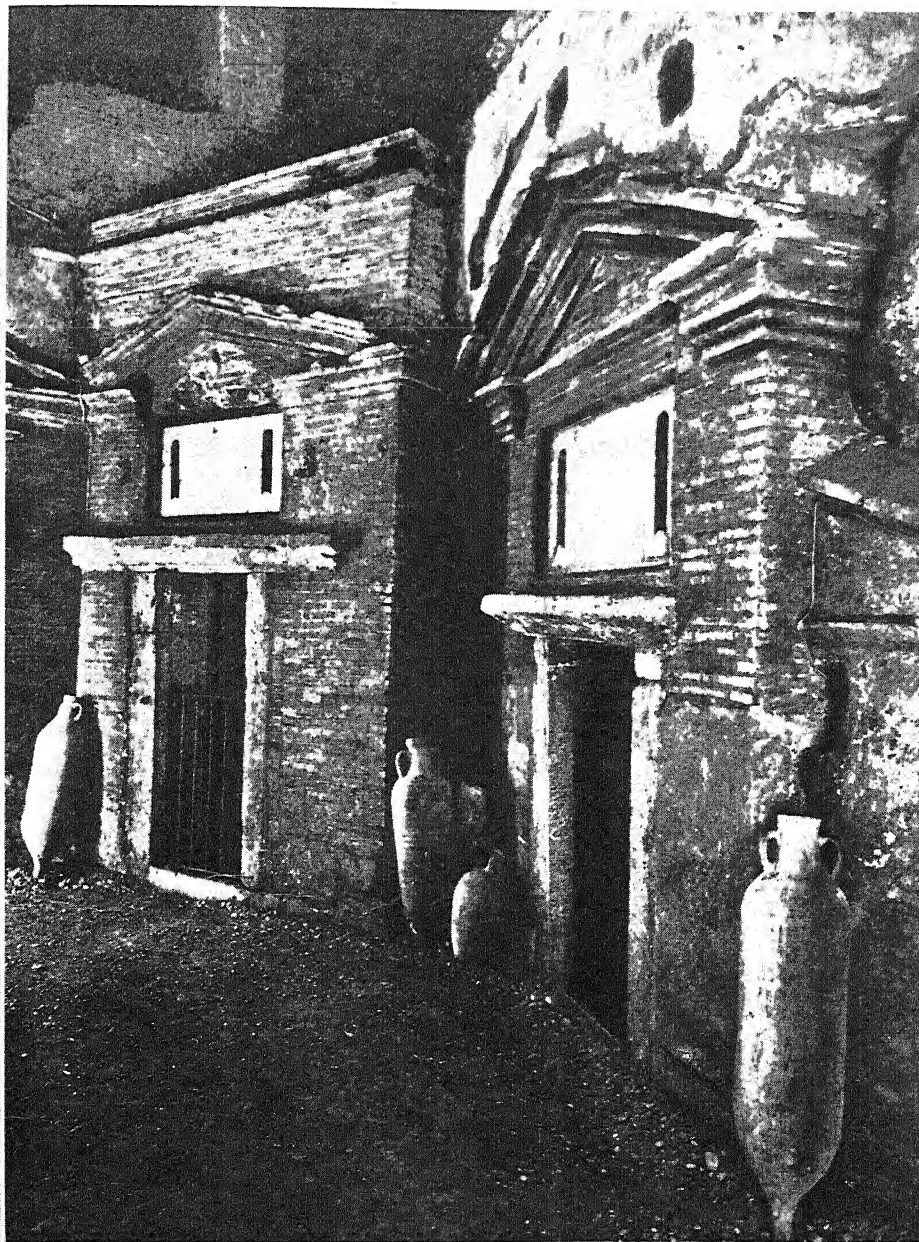


Photo by Alinari

Here in the gloomy catacombs under the church of St. Sebastian, the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul

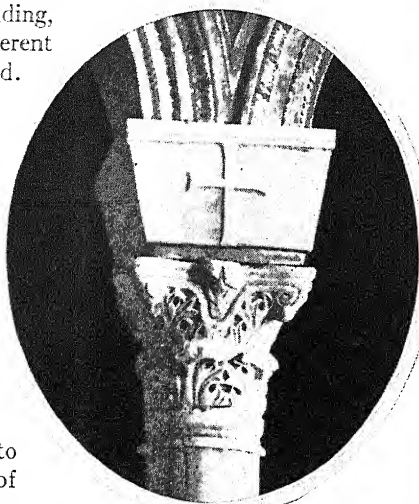
churches. They wanted to make the Lord's house as beautiful as possible, but they were still too poor to employ good artists. So they did the best they could. When they needed columns they simply took any they

are said to have rested before they were removed to the churches which now bear their names.

could get from some old Roman building that no one was using—just as poor people to-day go and salvage old wood and bricks to build a house. If the Christians could not get enough from one building, they had

to gather other columns from another building, often of a different height and kind. Then they might have to put in extra blocks at the top or bottom to make the columns match.

When they could not find any convenient Roman building, they had to make columns of their own. But the tools for doing this were not very good in those days. Stone cutters usually had only a drill that punched holes. They tried to copy the capitals of Roman columns faithfully, but the result was rather different from the original. You can make a design by punching



Photos by Alinari

To the right is a Byzantine column from the church of St. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, and above is a nearer view of its capital. Instead of modeling each leaf of his plant design, as a Roman artist would have done, so that lights and shadows would play upon it and bring out its form, the sculptor made a flat design and cut out the stone behind it, so that his pattern is like lace upon a dark background. He was really trying to copy the Roman way of making capitals, and this was as near as he could come to it.

This is the sarcophagus of Archbishop Theodore, from the church of St. Apollinare in Classe, in Ravenna. It is really a lovely piece of carving, with its simple but very effective design of peacocks—symbols of eternity—fruiting vines, and sacred monograms of Christ.



Photo by Alinari

holes in the stone, but not the same kind of thing that you can make by carving it patiently with a chisel. And so these early Christian capitals look very different from the Roman ones they were meant to copy.

But at least the Christians put some churches together. The next thing was to make them beautiful. The inside was the important part. It needed color, and one way of getting color was to paint pictures on the walls. This would make a gay interior, and would help to tell the story of Christ to the congregation.

Those old pictures on the walls have not lasted very well through all these hundreds of years. But luckily for us, the early Christians took to using another kind of decoration that is hard and lasting, and has kept



## THE HISTORY OF ART

its color for us to see even to-day. That was mosaic (mō-zā'ik); it consisted of tiny bits of colored glass or marble all fitted together to make a picture. The Romans had often put mosaic pictures on their floors, and the Christians took to putting such pictures on the church walls, where one could see them better.

At the start they copied from Roman mosaics, with their twining vines and flowers. Sometimes they made pictures of crowds of people in rapid motion, all done in the sketchy way of the Roman painters. For instance, in the great church of St. Mary in Rome there are mosaics of the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea. The wave has curled back on the left to make a path of yellow sand. On the right we can see the walls of Egypt with their watch towers. The scene is full of life.

This kind of picture looks very well on a flat wall; but the most important surface for a picture in a Christian church was curved like the inside of a shell. It was the ceiling of the apse (āps)—or of the far end of the church, where the altar stood and where your eye first rested as you entered at the door.

There is a church in Rome that was built, probably as far back as 384 A.D., over the house of a Roman senator named Pudens (pū'dēns). This man was surely an important figure among the early Christians; indeed, the stories tell us that he was a friend of St. Peter. The church built over his house is named for his daughter, St. Pudentiana. The artist who designed the mosaic for the

apse of this church found that a few large figures showed much better from the distance than a crowd of small ones. In the center of the picture Christ sits on a throne of gold



Photo by Alinari

In a third century Roman tomb where a group of Christians—among them the family of the Aurelii—buried their dead, many early Christian frescoes have been found. One of them, the picture of an apostle, is shown above.

studded with gems. His raiment is of gold, and so is the cross above Him on Mount Calvary. Around Him are grouped some of His friends, though their figures have been sadly shortened in a rebuilding of the church. In the old days the mosaic reached much farther down than it does now. Above in Heaven are the four symbols that stand for the four writers of the gospels—a man for St. Matthew, a lion for St. Mark, an ox for St. Luke, and an eagle for St. John. Do you remember that we saw these creatures made into one far back in ancient Babylon?

The most interesting things in this mosaic are the walls and towers in the background. We suppose from old maps and drawings that they picture the main street of Jerusalem as it looked in those days, some 350 years after Christ.

When we look at this fine picture we must try to remember that it is made up of thousands of tiny squares fitted into a mosaic. Instead of the marble pieces that the Romans used in their mosaics, each of

these tiny squares is made of two pieces of glass, with colors worked in between them. The glass lies on the surface and glitters in the light. The mosaic artist also loved to use real gold in their work, and the bright metal gave a resplendent effect.

The clumsy hands of the workmen could



Photos by Alinari, and Metropolitan Museum of Art  
Here you see the difference between the old classic style of capital, shown at the left, and the newer, Byzantine style. In spite of his many handicaps the Byzantine artist has made something truly original and beautiful.





Photo by Alinari

This amusing mosaic tells the story of Noah. It belongs to a group of thirteenth century mosaics in the church of Saint Mark, in Venice. How stiff and un-

real these figures are, yet in what a lively way they tell their story! Their draperies show some trace of earlier, classic styles.

not lay the pieces quite evenly in the plaster, and each piece catches the light at a different angle, to give off thousands of little sparkles. The candlelight reflected from all these little bits of bright glass makes the dim church seem to be set with jewels.

#### The New City of Constantine

While the Christians in Rome were struggling to make their churches beautiful with very little money, those in the Eastern empire were far wealthier. In 313 A.D. the emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the religion of the state. This might have meant new wealth and power for the Christians in Rome, and indeed Constantine began by building some great churches there; but he found the old pagan ways very hard to uproot, and he finally left the city of St. Peter to build himself a new capital in the East. He chose the site of the old Greek city of Byzantium (bī-zǎn'shī-ūm) and renamed it Constantinople in his own honor. This city remained the capital of the Eastern empire until the Turks captured it in 1453. Its art is called Byzantine (bī-zǎn'tīn). It was the Christian art of the East.

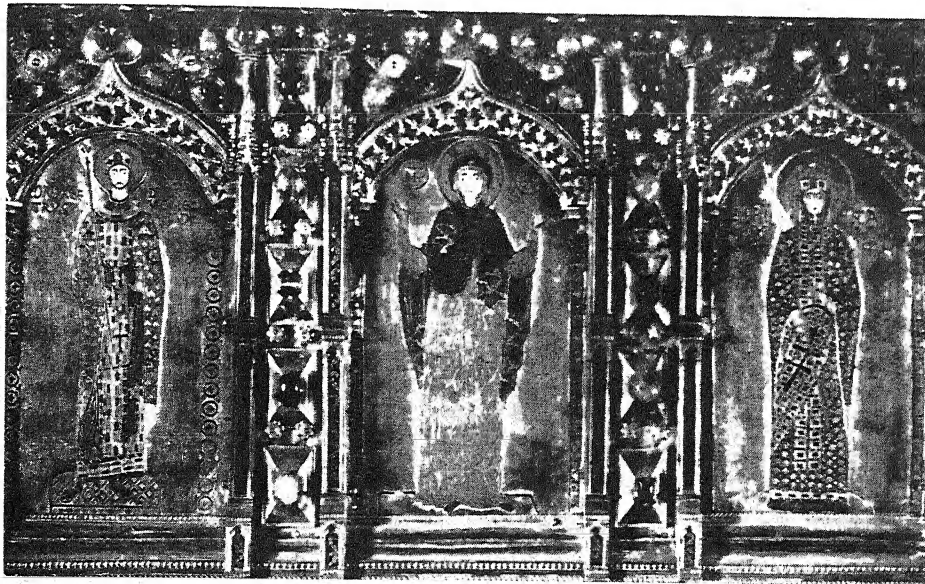
At first the Eastern art was very much like the early Christian art in any other place, for the mighty Roman empire had set the style in the East as it had in every other

part of the world. But the Eastern empire included Greece, and that soon made a good deal of difference. A strong Greek influence was soon at work in the art of the Byzantine craftsmen.

Nor is that all, by any means. East is east, and West is west, as we have been so often told; and always in every Eastern art there has been a love of splendor and of lavish decoration which have made any Western art look a little sober in comparison. It is those traits which we call oriental, and they soon began to show in the Christian art of the Eastern empire. The Christians there, with the Emperor behind them, could afford to do things on a grand scale, and their art grew more and more luxuriant.

#### When Byzantine Art Was Born

Apparently even their best workmen did not have such good tools or training as the artists of the old Greek and Roman days. But they had their eyes open. Some workman who had set out with his drill to copy the capital of a Corinthian column must have become disgusted, and decided that nobody could make curly leaves with nothing but a drill. He may have sat back on his heels and looked at the stone with which he had been struggling, only to decide that it was a sad mess—at least if it pretended to look



In an exquisite setting of gold, silver, enamel, and jewels stands the Madonna, with illustrious persons on either side of her. This is a detail from the famous

"Pala d' Oro," an altarpiece which is considered one of the world's treasures. It is Byzantine work, and was made in Constantinople in the twelfth century.

like a Corinthian capital. It simply did not look like that.

But this artist was an Easterner, with an eye for patterns, and he started to look at his work in another way. Suppose he gave up trying to make it look Corinthian. The drill holes already made a rather pretty design in the stone. How about trying to see what sort of pattern he could make with such holes? So he made a new kind of capital. It was like lacework in stone; and with such an event Roman art died and Byzantine art was born.

#### The Gorgeous Art of the East

In the East people have an eye for color as well as for patterns. They make the most gorgeous rugs in the world. They love to put patterns even on the outside of a building, and to lavish colors in all sorts of places. The art of the mosaic was a great delight to them. In the West the workers in mosaic started in a small way with the apse. In the East they set the whole inside of a church aglow with it. The edifice seems to be literally built of rich color.

They loved gold for a background. They

would make a whole church glitter with hundreds of thousands of tiny squares of gold. They put pictures into mosaic, just as did the artists in the West, but they made them more rigid and less human. The Eastern Christians were not sure they wanted their pictures to look like real persons. A strangely beautiful stiff madonna with great eyes was the kind of figure that they thought it reverent to make of a heavenly person. After all, they felt, these holy beings did not have bodies like our own, and they must look different. They are very beautiful and very bright in color, as they stand out brilliantly against the gold background.

Of course the Byzantine artists did not work in mosaic alone. They were marvelous painters and ivory carvers, and they made fine picture books as well. In the earlier days, when they were still copying Greece and Rome, they were more likely to paint lively and dashing figures, as in the story of Joshua. Later the figures grew more rigid, like the saints in the mosaics, staring sedately out of their wide, bright eyes.

The city of Ravenna in Italy is a very interesting place because it was the meeting



Photos by Alinari, British Museum, and Boston Museum of Fine Arts

Above is an icon, or image, of the Virgin. This strange and lovely figure was painted in the sixteenth century, but it is easy to see that it belongs to an old style that goes back to Byzantium.

This ivory cover for a sacred book was made in the fifth century and comes from Ravenna. The luxurious people of that day liked their books bound in gold, silver, and ivory, and set with jewels.

place of East and West. The later Roman emperors in the West made it their capital. Ambassadors went back and forth between the court at Ravenna and the one at Constantinople. Byzantine artists and Byzantine ideas came to Ravenna and gave to it more of the Eastern art than any other Western city ever knew. And through Ravenna many traits of the Byzantine art spread into Italy.

In fact, the two rulers who made Ravenna famous both lived for a time in Constantinople.

First there was Galla Placidia. She was the daughter of a famous Roman emperor called Theodosius, and she was brought up at Constantinople. Her brother Honorius was emperor when the Goths (göth) came marching down through Italy and captured Rome. The sack of Rome in the year 410 was a terrible event. Rome captured! In all her his-



In this ivory relief the East and the West have met. The classic drapery and the Corinthian columns belong to the Western world, while the rich ornament is typical of the East. The whole effect is graceful and tranquil, but we can see that the artist did not quite know what to do with the angel's feet.

tory no enemy had ever entered her gates before as a conqueror. People said the world was coming to an end.

Galla Placidia happened to be in Rome during that famous sack. Because she was so beautiful a princess, she was carried off as a captive. One of the Gothic chieftains fell in love with her and married her. He was the brother of the famous Alaric (äl'ä-rik), who had led the Goths when they took Rome. When Alaric died, the rule of captured Italy fell to his brother and to Galla Placidia.

During her days of power, Galla Placidia made Ravenna a place of beauty. She inspired many buildings and paintings and mosaics. Remembering what she had seen in Constantinople, she loved to have these buildings all lined with mosaic pictures, and when she died she was laid away in a lovely mosaic tomb.

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It is in Ravenna still. On the outside it looks like a plain little house, but inside it is like a jewel box. Galla Placidia must have loved blue, for her tomb is the bluest thing one can imagine. Walls and ceiling are all made of sparkling blue mosaic. Up above your head is a gold cross with stars clustered around it in the blue mosaic sky. On the walls tall saints in bright robes look out at you. A great vine curls up over the ceiling in one alcove. In another sits the Good Shepherd in gold and royal purple, with His sheep all turning their gentle faces toward Him.

After Galla Placidia a Goth ruled at Ravenna under the famous name of Theodoric (thē-ōd'ō-rik). He too had lived at Constantinople, and he liked the Eastern way of building in colors. The buildings of his day are bright with mosaic, too, though not so fine as those of Galla. She was, after all, a blue-blooded princess who knew about fine arts, and Theodoric was still a little rough and savage. He belonged to the new race that was beginning to take Europe away from such people as Galla Placidia. But the day of the Goths had not yet fully arrived.

First came a great emperor named Justinian (jūs-tīn'i-ān), who brought the East and West together once again, for a final stand against the barbarians. Justinian was a great builder, like the Roman emperors of older days. To him we owe one of the mightiest churches ever built—the church of Santa Sophia at Constantinople. It was dedicated two years before his death, on Christmas morning in the year 563; and though it is now a Turkish mosque, it remains the greatest sight in the ancient city over which it towers.

Justinian also built churches and palaces at Ravenna. There you can see him and

his empress still—in their robes of state in mosaic pictures on the wall of the church of St. Vitale (vē-tā'le). Perhaps he and his empress are taking part in the dedication of the church. What gorgeous gold and jewels they wear! Their clothes are stiff with embroidery, and even their shoes are jeweled.

Their figures are very long, and their eyes are egg-shaped; and figures of this sort were to stay in fashion for a long time. Not until about 1200 did people begin to try something else. The famous church of St. Mark in Venice, with its oriental beauty due to the connections between Venice and the East, is all aglow with such strange, richly-clad figures.

In the East this kind of drawing suited the people so well that they might never have changed it if the Mohammedans had not come to capture Constantinople in 1453, and to wipe away the Christian art there. Some of the artists fled to the West and taught their ways to Westerners. In the outlying countries where the Turks did not penetrate, the older kind of art kept right on. In Russia to-day you will find village churches with just such pictures as we have been describing. They are now called ikons (i'kōn)—a word which comes from the Greek and means "images."

One of the reasons why art kept on in its old ways was that after Justinian there were hard times all over the empire, and no one had the time to learn new ideas, or the wealth for carrying them out. East and West were split apart again, and there was a mad scramble for thrones. The East went its own way, growing ever more and more oriental. The West had to grapple with those Goths who were the ancestors of the people of our day. In a later story we shall see what these rude men did in the arts.

The four bronze horses which stand above the great arch of the church of Saint Mark's in Venice have had many admirers—and many adventures. They were made in Graeco-Roman times, and were once part of a chariot group. One of them is shown here.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

One of the earliest admirers of these horses was the doge Enrico Dandolo, who brought them to Venice after he had helped to take Constantinople in 1204. Then Napoleon carried them off to Paris—where they might still be if Francis of Austria had not returned them to Venice in 1815.



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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

No. 8

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### WHEN THE ART OF THE WORLD WAS MADE ANEW

*Note: For basic information  
not found on this page, consult  
the general Index, Vol. 15*

*For statistical and current facts,  
consult the Richards Year Book  
Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

Why the fine arts wilted and  
nearly died before the Goths  
settled down, 11-84

Why the Christian monks made  
the finest picture books, 11-84

What the Romanesque artist did  
to the capitals of his columns,  
11-86

How the Romanesque spread un-  
til it became the art of all  
Europe, 11-87

Before people could read, they  
learned their stories from the  
walls of their churches, 11-88

Why we do not know the names  
of the artist-workmen, 11-88

How religious travels began, 11-  
90

Why the Romanesque was a prel-  
ude to one of the world's great  
periods, 11-90

#### *Things to Think About*

What had the ancient trade  
routes from the East to do with  
the art of Charlemagne's time?

Why was all art sacred art after  
the decline of the Roman em-  
pire?

What had the establishment of  
the system of abbeys to do  
with art?

What was the great reward of the  
Romanesque artisan?

#### *Related Material*

History of the Middle Ages,  
Chapter I, 5-263

History of England, Chapter I,  
6-1

History of Ireland, Chapter I, 6-  
143

What the first churches were like,  
11-440

Charlemagne, 12-368

Richard the Lion-hearted, 12-  
371

History of France, Chapter I, 6-  
164

History of Germany, Chapter I,  
6-204

#### *Leisure-time Activities*

Make a drawing for a page of il-  
luminated manuscript, 11-84

Make a simple clay model of a  
scene on a Romanesque capital,

11-86

Try to find examples of Roman-  
esque sculpture on the churches  
near your home, 11-89

#### *Summary Statement*

The Romanesque period  
marked the change from the old  
classic art of Rome to the new  
religious art that was to be called

Gothic. In a great surge of re-  
ligious feeling the conquerors of  
the Roman empire brought to art  
an originality which was to go far.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

# WHEN *the* ART of the WORLD WAS MADE ANEW

*When Great Rome Fell in Ruin, the Fine Arts Almost Vanished from Europe; but Here We See Them Growing Up Again, among the Conquering Barbarians, into Something of Which the Old Romans Never Dreamed*

**L**IKE all the other things that go to make up a civilization, the fine arts grew to a perfection in the ancient world and spread all through it. Then, like all the other things, they suffered a decay. We have told the tale of their rise and fall in our former stories of the arts, and of their eclipse under the conquering Goths (göth). Now we must begin over and see how these Goths and their descendants began to create the new arts which have

Most of the beautiful Celtic crosses that are found on the British Isles date from the time of the Norse invasions, and some—particularly those of Iona, in Scotland—bear clear traces of that fact. But there is little on the crosses of Ireland to remind us of those fierce vikings and their strange runes. We find, instead, memories of the ancient East. On the cross to the right are lions rending their prey—a favorite subject with artists of Western Asia for many, many centuries. We find Eastern touches, too, in the way the figures are cut and in the way they are grouped together. A Celtic cross may be known by the circle which always surrounds the point where the bars cross. The central group on the cross shown here represents the Crucifixion. Above it are shown Moses, Aaron, and Hur, whose story you will find in the Book of Exodus, in the Bible. On the shaft of the cross are three panels showing incidents in the life of St. Columba, who carried Christianity to Scotland.

come down to us to-day in our modern world.

To get a picture of Europe about seven hundred years after Christ, it is well to take a map with the old Roman empire marked on it. Of course the Roman empire stretched over into Asia and Africa too, but we are now talking only of the western part of the world. Take your hand and cover up everything except the southern half of Spain and the north and west of England—and Ireland. Your hand stands for the

This cross comes from Ireland. On it is engraved a Celtic inscription: "A prayer for Muiredach by whom was made this cross." Muiredach was the second abbot of Monasterboice. This worthy man—for he must have been worthy to have made so lovely a cross—died in 923 A.D.

men from the north who came down and blotted out civilization everywhere except in the little spots you have left uncovered. Though it may not be strictly exact this will give a pretty fair idea of what happened.

The Goths did not mean to blot things out. They greatly admired what

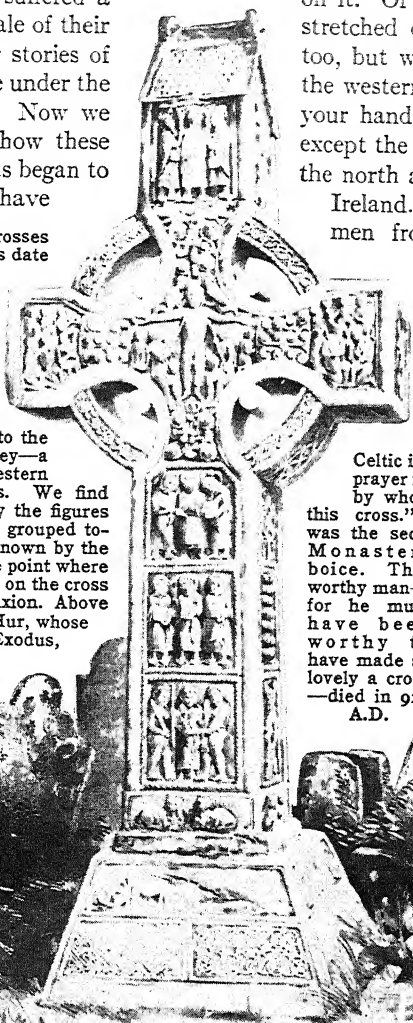


Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

they found in the south. Some of them had been through the East and had brought with them some pretty bits of art that had caught their eye—like the horn of Upas which some Saxon chief carried all the way to England.

No one likes to have strange people come and seize his possessions. It is human nature to defend them, and there was bound to be a quarrel when the Goths came into Southern Europe and wanted it for their own. During the years of quarrel the fine arts did not have a chance. They wilted and nearly died before the Goths had won their fight and settled down.

But first we may say a word about the places the Goths did not touch. They did not do much in Spain because they had no time. The Arabs came along from the south and took over the country, instead. The south of Spain still has the stamp of their Moorish rule, and later Spanish art was to use many Moorish patterns.

Ireland was too far off and too cold for the German tribes who wanted an easy living. So Ireland prospered all by itself. The Irish were a gay people, always doing sudden and daring things, much as they do them to-day; and their art is lively and full of color.

#### The Art and Learning of Ireland

From very ancient times there seems to have been a trade route through the north of Europe, perhaps through Russia from Greece and the East. The Irish had an eye for fine things, and they modeled their art on Eastern patterns. They were a learned people, too, and they loved fine books.

Very early, about 500 A.D., Christian

monks from Rome came and founded colonies among the Irish. They built churches which are now gone; and they made fine carvings and jewelry, and above all fine books. Such a book is the Irish Book of Kells, while another is the Anglo-Irish Lindisfarne gospels. If you look at a page of the

Lindisfarne Gospels, all decorated in color, you can hardly believe that human eyes and hands could have done anything so delicate and tiny without going dizzy or blind. Perhaps the artist did go blind, but he finished his work. He says he is a "most unworthy monk."

The Lindisfarne Gospels were always highly prized. In fact, they were thought to work miracles. The story goes that when Danish invaders came burning and stealing, the monks fled with the precious gospels, but their treasure was washed overboard into the sea. It was a terrible tragedy and the monks went to bed in great sorrow. But in a dream appeared St. Cuthbert, telling

them to go down along the shore. They rushed down to the sand—and there lay the gospels as brilliant and beautiful as ever and quite undamaged by the salt water.

Irish art and learning passed over to England as England settled down under the rule of the Saxons.

Charlemagne (shār'lē-mān) rescued Europe for a time from its confusion and built up a great empire. The pope crowned him at Rome as emperor; but it was a northern empire this time, with its capital up in German lands, at Aix-la-Chapelle (ēks-lā-shā'pēl').

With Charlemagne came order for a while. It was his dream to turn his northern forests



Photo by British Museum

On Holy Isle off the northwest coast of England was the celebrated abbey of Lindisfarne, founded in 635 A.D. by a monk from St. Columba's monastery in Iona. Here the humble monks, to whom time meant nothing and sacred duty meant everything, poured their souls and all their ingenious skill into the making of a glorious series of manuscripts. The most beautiful of these is the "Lindisfarne Gospels," a page of which is shown above. Many, many patient hours must have been spent tracing this fine lettering and delicate, detailed ornament.

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into fine cities where art and learning might flourish as they had once flourished in the south. But he had almost nothing to begin with. He even had to learn how to write himself, and his courtiers were wild warriors, with hands too clumsy even to hold a pen.

So Charlemagne had to go out and search for learning. The interesting thing is that he sent first to England for it. And that was a little like sending to the East, for England had learned from Ireland and Ireland from far-off Byzantium; so we must not be surprised to find picture books that look rather Byzantine being made in France and Germany. But the artists of Charlemagne learned from many lands—Spain and Italy and even far-away Syria.

We speak of art and learning together because they were very closely connected in those days. The church was the only home of both. In the wild days after the year 500 in Europe, the monasteries were the sole shelter for thoughtful people. There the patient monks copied books and decorated them with colors and with pictures. These picture books are all that we have left of painting in those times. They are beautiful things, and they are interesting also because painters and carvers later searched them for ideas to use in their work on the walls of churches. One account of the decoration of a church says that a lady sat with a book open on her knee and told the painters just what pictures to put

on the walls—they were copies from the book.

Sometimes these pictures show the saints sitting at their desks in stately postures. In Germany especially the artists liked this sober style. But sometimes the figures come to life and seem to be dashing all over the page—perhaps in a gust of wind that wraps their clothes all around their legs.

In England and in France the people liked vigorous figures swiftly moving. The pictures are like those in the Byzantine books the artists copied—but with a difference. There are gay little animals in the books that Charlemagne's artists made; and sometimes there is a face that looks out at you so eagerly that it seems alive, even if the body of the person is twisted into some strange, impossible posture. For these early

artists were often very simple, very frank, and very human. One of them once had to make a picture to illustrate the text, "Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord!" He simply drew a picture of the Lord asleep in bed, with the holy angels trying to awaken Him. Such was the frank and simple-minded art of the early age of faith.

And such were the pictures that were copied out of the books upon the walls of the churches. In the days of Charlemagne and for some time afterward such pictures could be seen in churches all over Europe. When you now look at a picture of some old

church of Charlemagne's time you must remember that in his day the building was no such somber place as it may be to-day. Its walls and columns were all bright with the colors of these paintings. The interior of the church was a great picture book telling the story of the Bible.

This was the art of the early Middle Ages. It was all sacred, because all learning and all art were inside the walls of the church. It

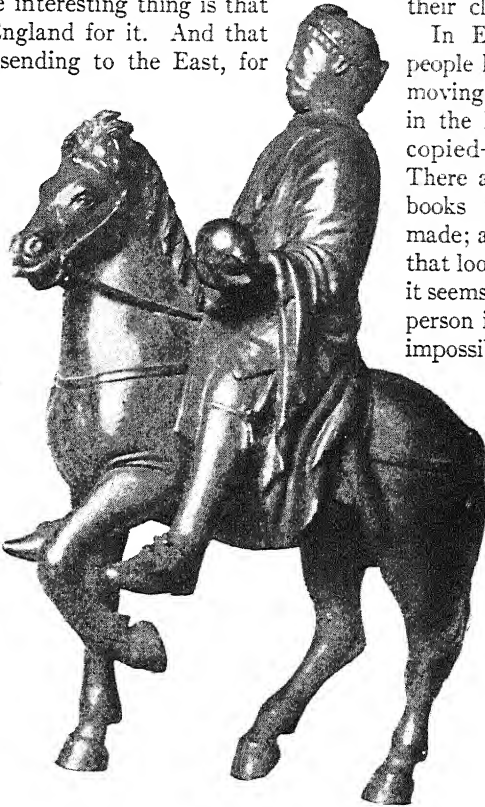


Photo by Giraudon, Paris

This is a statue of Charlemagne, the mighty king of the Franks. How different this is from the lifelike statue of Marcus Aurelius which we have shown in our story of Roman art. The king is not really majestic; he is merely a symbol of majesty. In his hand he holds the orb of royal power.





Photo by Ollivier, Paris

These storied capitals are in the nave of the cathedral of Autun, and are among the most remarkable works of their kind in the whole of France. Here we see—in place of the curling leaves we found on ancient

capitals—stories of the Old and New Testaments, fables, and stories from the lives of the saints, all delightfully told. Here too are all the amusing animals of which Romanesque artists were so fond.

was a strange mixture of awkwardness and aspiration—an awkwardness that would have made any Greek or Roman of the old days gasp, but a Christian aspiration which even Phidias would never have understood, and which was one day to give birth to a great new art rivaling his own.

#### How the Art of Europe Changed

This early period in the art of the Middle Ages is called Carolingian (kär'ō-lin'jī-ān), after Charlemagne, whose Latin name was "Carolus." It was to grow into the greater period which we call "Romanesque" (rō'-mān-ěsk'). Romanesque art was still built upon the old foundation of Roman art, but a new spirit, the spirit of the north, was beginning to have its way.

So within two centuries after the death of Charlemagne a great change had come over the art of Europe, which was by now in the hands of the artists who had been practicing a long time. You can see this new thing in many ways. We shall give one illustration from the capitals of some columns that were carved very late in the Romanesque period—in about the year 1150.

Look at these columns in our picture of them. They are very different from anything the world had seen before. They are

Romanesque—"Romanlike," and yet how different from the Roman—for they belong to the first great form of art in which the northern peoples of Europe were making themselves felt. Up to about this time the northern lands—France and Germany and England—had only been trying to catch up with the south. Now they are at last beginning to blaze a new path.

How daring they are! The old Greek and Roman capitals look quiet in comparison, as do even the Byzantine capitals with all their fine patterns. We have come to an artist who does not care about any of those older things, and who wants to put a set of pictures on his capitals!

He has a great deal to say in a picture. He has carved the soldiers asleep at the tomb of Christ just before the resurrection. One is sleeping on top of another, but that does not trouble such an artist as this man. How well he has caught the way the top soldier's head falls back in his sleep!

Now these soldiers are lying asleep right where an acanthus leaf would have come in a Corinthian column of Greece or Rome. But even Rome is only a distant memory now, and there is a great deal that is more interesting to our artist than acanthus leaves.

Then there is a picture in carving of the

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Last Supper. It shows Christ and the apostles all at table, and the table runs right around the capital like a frieze. To be sure, the table has no legs; but that again is not the kind of thing to trouble our artist. In fact, it is just the kind of thing we so often find in this early art of Northern Europe.

The important thing about Romanesque art is that it is so eager and ambitious. Nothing is too hard for the artists to try. For many a year the people had been satisfied with small, low churches, but now the builders are trying to send up their towers to the sky. They are preparing the way for the great Gothic builders who came after them; for the solid and massive builders of the Romanesque school, with all their eager experiments, were the direct ancestors of the Gothic architects and artists.

Among these Romanesque artists, most of them churchmen, we find men who are daring to do vast things such as art had forgotten for nearly eight hundred years. In the mighty churches that they built we find life-size figures coming into being again under the tools of the carvers. All of this was under way by the year 1000, and the movement gathered force from that time onward. Thus Romanesque art spread rapidly in the eleventh century and became the art of all Europe in the twelfth.

At first thought it may seem strange to

find a single kind of art all over Europe. The continent was split up into hundreds of little countries. After Charlemagne it had felt the last and possibly the greatest assault from the north. This came with the real Northmen, or Normans, as they are called—the sturdy vikings who came over the sea

and conquered wherever they went: all through Northern France and England, and even as far south as Sicily. Wherever these men went they carried a new daring and a new set of ideas, and the art of the builders especially made a great leap.

Yet it took these men some time to settle down, and in the meanwhile Europe consisted of hundreds of little groups, always jealous of one another and often in confusing warfare. What was it that gave one kind of art to the whole land?

Of course it was the church, the only power that held Europe together in those days. All over Europe were the abbeys of the

monks. Now an abbey was not merely a church and a monastery for the monks to live in. It might also have a hospital and a school, a bakery, a farm, a hotel, and a law court—any or all of those things, and still others. The abbey guided the life of everybody around. Nor is that all. The abbey was not merely one little kingdom by itself. It was a part of a whole chain of other abbeys in France, England, Italy, Spain, and

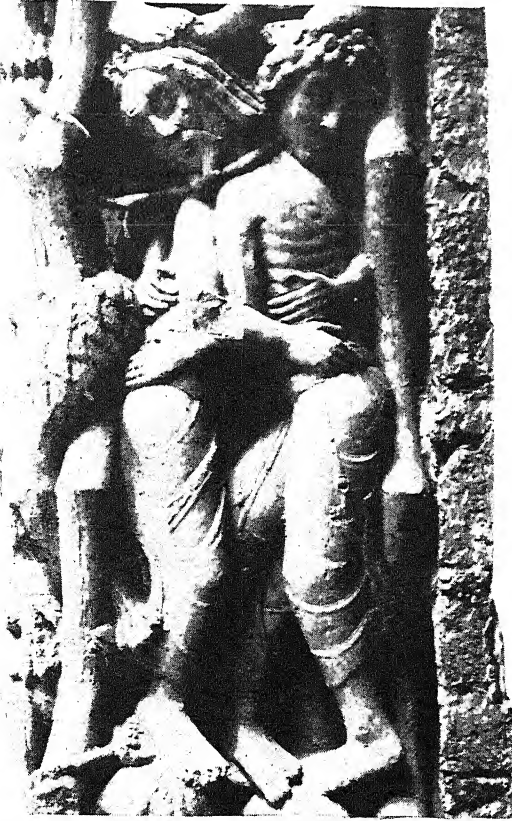


Photo by Giraudon, Paris

These strange, interlaced figures from a pillar of the twelfth century church of Souillac may tell a tale of many borrowings. Some scholars believe that the sculptor who made them got his first lessons in art from the painted miniatures of Southern France. These, in turn, may well have been inspired by miniatures from far-off Syria.

elsewhere. The monks would come and go among all these places, and art and learning would come and go with them. That is why the art was international, bound together everywhere by the teaching of the church.

#### How the Monks Taught by Pictures

For the teaching of the church was largely through the form of art. These monks made many a beautiful book, but the books were not for the common people. The common people could not read. They had to be taught either by word of mouth, in sermons and stories—or else by pictures. And what better place for pictures than the church? Every person in the land went to church, and everyone would see the pictures. So the outside and inside of the church were made into carved and painted picture books of all that pious people ought to know. Eyes that had never learned to read need only look—and they would see the whole story of the Bible and the saints in a church.

When in Europe you come to some great, deep doorway with a round arch over it—not a pointed arch—you are looking at Romanesque art. Carved above the door and all around its sides you may see pictures of Christ in heaven with his saints. On one side you may see hideous little devils making off with the lost souls, while on the other side the souls of the blest are mounting joyously to Heaven. It does not matter much where you may be in Europe; everywhere, in France, England, Italy, or Spain, you will find about the same pictures of the same people.

#### When Figures Came to Life

Of course you would hardly call them "people." These artists were not looking at persons like you and me when they made their carvings. For a long time they had never dared to think that any heavenly being, saint or martyr, would look like us. Their carvings of the joys of Heaven and the horrors of hell are meant to show figures that are rather different from the men and women of this world.

And yet if you look closer, you will see that some of the artists are already beginning to break away from the old rules. They are

not satisfied with stiff figures any more. Their figures want to come to life. They have begun to twist and turn in impossible ways, as though they had much to say if they could only get it out.

Of course the ways of saying things—that is, the forms of this art—differ a little in different places, even though the stories are always the same. At Arles (ärl), in the south of France, the old Romans had left many monuments of their art. So the artists who decorated the church of St. Trophime (trô'fēm') there could not help copying the old Roman art to some extent. The figures that stand between the columns in that church might almost be Roman senators.

In Germany and Italy the artists copied their old picture books as carefully as possible, and remained solid and sober in all their work. It was in the southeastern part of France that the newer style grew up which was so much alive and so eager that people liked it best and copied it most often.

#### The Unknown Artists of Europe

Some such book as the Utrecht (ū'trēkt) psalter must have given those French artists their ideas. We can see these ideas at work in many places. For instance, the great doorway at Moissac (mwā'sāk') is probably copied from a Carolingian picture book. At Autun (ō'tūN') all the figures are stretched out till they are long and spindling like people in a bad dream—a terrible dream of the Last Judgment. How vivid the strange twistings of the bodies make this picture!

Later still, the artists were learning to give their figures fewer of these strange twists; and as the bodies grew calmer, the faces were becoming more and more human. There are some saints carved on columns at Oviedo (ō-vyā'thō), in Spain, which are so real that we almost expect them to speak to us.

And who were all these artists that told their stories in paint and stone all over Europe? What were the names of the great ones? Nobody knows. With a rare exception here and there, they left no name behind them. They did not want to. They cared nothing about whether their names should be known to men hundreds of years after them. Eager only to do good work, they had



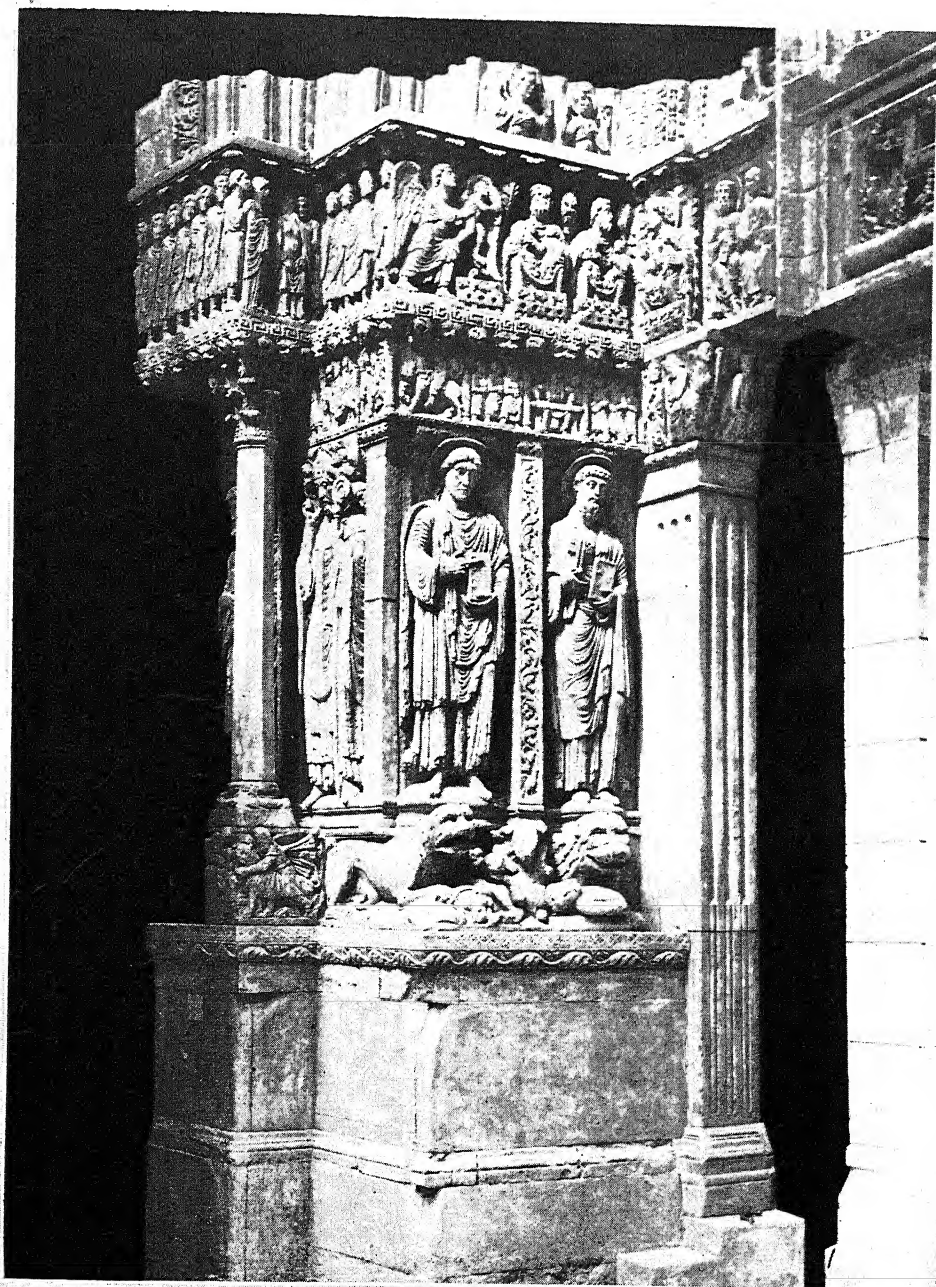


Photo by Ollivier, Paris

This portal of the church of St. Trophime at Arles belongs to the end of the twelfth century. Can you guess where the sculptor got his ideas? We have said in this article that the figures of the apostles look rather like Roman senators. The sculptor took other things from ancient Rome—the columns with their Corinthian capitals, and the classic designs which are carved in bands separating the figures and the scenes

one from another. Some of his ideas must have come from Byzantine miniatures; the animals most certainly came from the East. The three seated figures near the top, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, symbolize paradise. In their laps are the happy souls that have deserved Heaven. In other churches of France, Abraham alone stands for Heaven, but in Byzantine miniatures we find all three—just as we see them here.



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## THE HISTORY OF ART

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no eagerness at all for fame when they should be gone.

What were they, that men should remember them? The story they were telling was the important thing, and they considered themselves as nothing in comparison. It mattered not at all what man it was who carved a given doorway, or whether one man or a dozen did it. Forgetful of themselves, they gave their minds and hearts to the cause of their art and the cause of the church. Out of the barbarian night they were lighting a flame of new art that was to shine down through the ages to come—and to do that was in itself a reward. But the great reward was to spread the teaching of the church.

Before we close, we ought to say a little more about the way the teaching of the church spread among all the people. For vast numbers of people were not content merely to learn its teaching in their own parish churches at home. They rose and traveled all over the land, or over many lands, to see the pictures and to learn the teaching everywhere.

They were really going to see their friends—not ordinary friends, of course, but their friends among the saints. The saints were very near and real to any man in those days. They took care of him, and he loved them. If he were a soldier, St. Lawrence was his special protector. For a child it was St. Anthony. If one had a pain he prayed to St. Luke to make it better. Then there was his special friend, the saint for whom he had been named; and there were the great friends of all men—Jesus himself, the Virgin Mary, and the twelve apostles. It was a holy thing to visit your friends, and the best way to visit them was to go to the place where they had lived. The crusaders could go to the

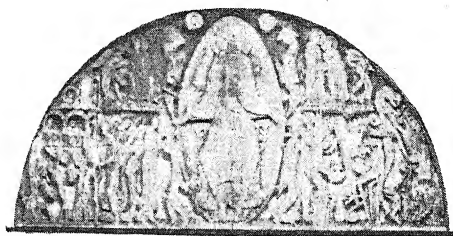
Holy Land, to visit and rescue the tomb of Christ. If you could not go so far, you might still walk to Rome to see St. Peter, or to Compostela (*kôm'pô-stā'lä*), in Spain, to see St. James.

Of course it was a long trip from England or France, but there would be plenty of other people going the same way, and many sights to see. You would visit the church of Moissac and of St. Trophime along the route, and many other sacred spots. Aside from churches and monasteries, you would see many fascinating places, famous in history and legend. There would be guides to tell you all about it, and to "show you the exact spot."

Thus if you went to see St. James at Compostela you would be sure to visit the rock where the famous Roland died—Roland the great warrior of Charlemagne who fell fighting the Moors, and who was too brave to blow his horn for help until it was too late. You would hear the whole heroic story of the battle between Saracen and Christian, and see where it was said to have happened.

Finally you would come to Compostela. You would stand inside the door and there would be St. James himself to greet you. He sat there with his staff, half smiling at you, and all his friends and yours stood around him, as if talking. You would greet them each in turn, and you would have never a doubt that they saw you and blessed you.

It was in these ways that the fine art of that age reached every corner of Europe, all bound up with the story of the Bible and the history and doctrine of the Christian church. On a later page we shall see how these arts grew and flourished toward the end of the Middle Ages, in one of the world's great periods of art.



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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 9

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### THE GLORIES OF GOTHIC ART

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

Gothic was young and it was human, 11-94

Why the young knights pledged themselves to the service of the Virgin, 11-94

What Saint Francis preached, and what it meant to the people of the Middle Ages, 11-96

To the 13th century, the world itself was like a vast cathedral in God's praise, 11-96

"There I am, I belong also to this holy place," 11-98

Why enormous colored glass windows were built, 11-100

Artists who were not afraid of their king and gave him a great nose, 11-103

How the Gothic centuries ran their course and what followed them, 11-105

#### *Related Material*

Gleam and gloom in the Middle Ages, 5-301

When the Christian faith saved Europe, 5-273

Gothic architecture, 11-459-70

Enamels of the Middle Ages, 12-65

Three-fold service of the knights, 14-393

Sir Thomas Malory, historian of knighthood, 13-145

Louis IX, holy warrior, 12-376

Tragic story of Joan of Arc, 12-385

#### *Habits and Attitudes*

Everyone, from the noblest to the humblest, joined forces in building the great cathedrals.

The beautiful structures which resulted are a monument to perfect coöperation.

#### *Leisure-time Activities*

Read the thrilling story of the Middle Ages as it is told in this encyclopedia.

Try to find examples of Gothic art in your everyday life.

Model in clay, in the manner of the 13th century, some scenes from your everyday life, 11-97

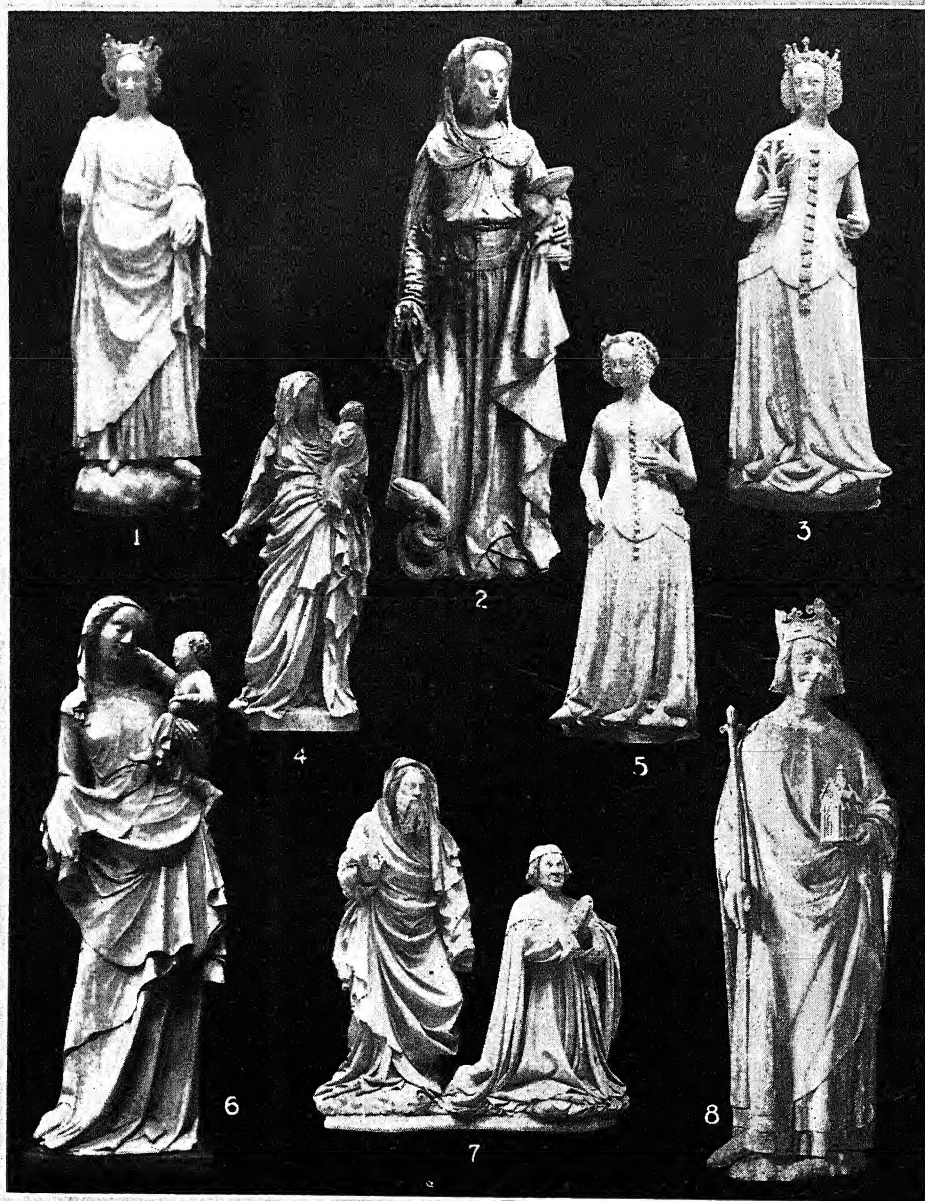
Draw and color a design for a church window, 11-101

#### *Summary Statement*

From 1100 to about 1500, Gothic art held sway in all the countries of Northern Europe,

and in many ways its beauty, grandeur, and spiritual elevation remain unsurpassed.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



With the passing of the thirteenth century there comes a change in art. Statues of kings begin to look benevolent and very human; queens take on a feminine, even a coquettish, air; and the Virgin smiles down upon her baby more gracefully and more humanly than ever before. Nos. 1, 3, and 5 are fourteenth century royal statues from the Palace of Justice at Poitiers; No. 8, the statue of Charles V, described in this article; No. 6, Virgin and Child from Notre Dame in Antwerp—also of the fourteenth century; Nos. 4 and 7, statues from the portal of the monastery built by the Duke of

Burgundy. In these strong and lifelike figures you may see the master touch of Claus Sluter. No. 2. Early in the sixteenth century Michel Colombe carved four Virtues for the tomb of Francis II, duke of Brittany. These were: Justice, with a sword and scales; Temperance, with a clock and a bride bit—she always knows when to stop; Fortitude, who showed her strength by snatching a dragon from a tower; and double-headed Prudence, who is shown here. On one side she has the head of a young girl, on the other, the head of a wise old man.

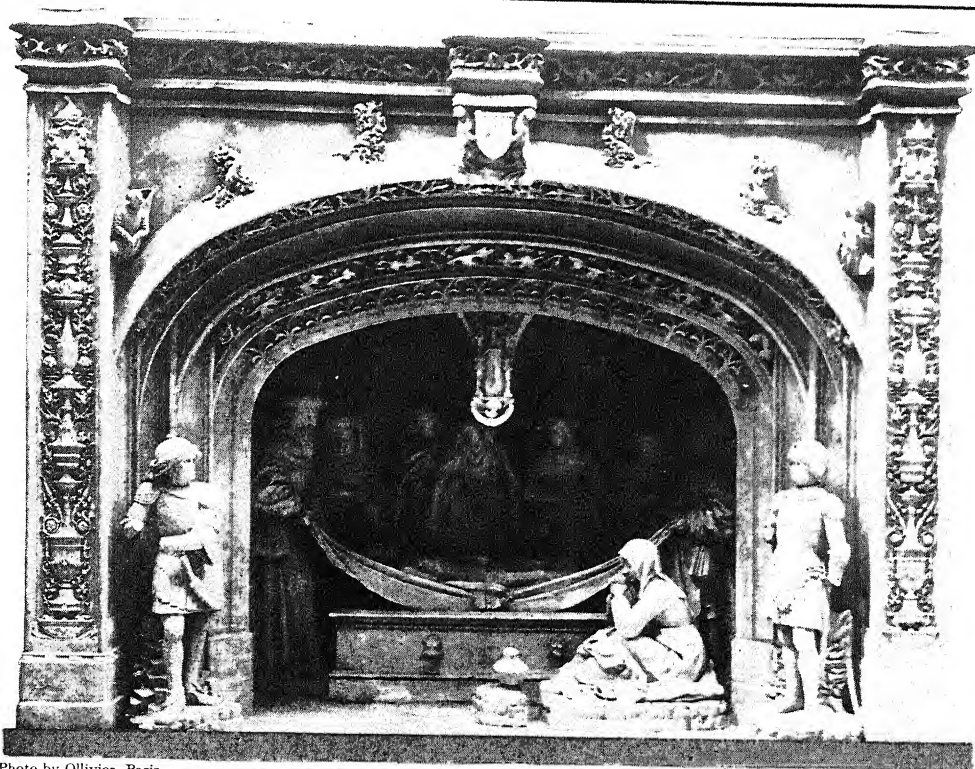


Photo by Ollivier, Paris

If you should ever visit the monastery of Solesmes, one of the most famous in France, you will see this beautiful sculpture. It belongs to the fifteenth century, and shows the Entombment of Christ. Quiet

and tranquil as the figures are, they are immensely sad. The pathetic little figure of Mary Magdalene, seated before her Master's tomb, is one of the most touching pictures of grief in all art.

## The GLORIES of GOTHIC ART

*This Is the Story of the Finest Art the World Saw between the Fall of Rome and the Birth of Modern Art in the Age of the Renaissance*

**I**N A former story we have told how Romanesque art grew up after the time of Charlemagne and spread all over Europe. In the later Middle Ages this turned into the kind of art that we call Gothic, and we must now tell about the glories of that art. The word "Gothic" (gōth'ik) may not be a very good name for it, but it is the name we always use. In the eighteenth century all the art of the Middle Ages was very much despised, and people called it Gothic for the simple reason that to them "Gothic" meant the same thing as "barbarous." We know far better now, but

we still use the word—though we are more likely to let it stand for "glorious."

Of course the greatest Gothic art was architecture, and of that we have told elsewhere. But there were other Gothic arts besides the art of building, and of these we are going to talk now.

Perhaps the best way to begin with Gothic art is to look at some separate examples first. Let us take just two, both of them from France: the statue of the Virgin in the cathedral of Notre Dame (nō'tr' dām') at Paris, and that of St. Theodore in the cathedral of Chartres (shār'tr'). Both of these



come from the thirteenth century, the flowering age of Gothic.

As we think back to the bearded and wrinkled faces that we formerly saw on Romanesque doorways, the most striking thing about St. Theodore is that he looks young. And not only does he look young but he looks like a real person whom you and I might know. So here are two things to start with about Gothic art. It has grown young and it has grown human. For the Romanesque artists the saints were heavenly beings, and different from us. The Gothic artists liked to remember that the saints had once been human like ourselves.

The greatest human friend the medieval worshipers had in Heaven was the Virgin Mary. She was "Our Lady"—the very name of the cathedral of Notre Dame means the cathedral of "Our Lady." Once a holy mother upon earth, she now pleaded for poor human sinners in heaven. Everyone pledged himself to serve the Virgin; and, especially, young knights going forth on the crusades loved to dedicate themselves to her service. From honoring and serving her they came to honoring and serving all gentle ladies. The Gothic age

was the age of chivalry—of bright dreams of noble deeds for the love of a fair lady.

Chivalry had its part in the cathedrals too, in honor of Our Lady. Many of the cathedrals were built in her name, and you may see her receiving her crown in Heaven on many of the portals. Often she stands on the central column of the door, holding her infant in her arms.

And St. Theodore is another patron of chivalry. Young, friendly, and human, he stands for the chivalric knight in the service of woman-kind. The ideal of faith and the ideal of chivalry mingle to inspire the art of the great Gothic centuries.

In the days of Gothic art the northern peoples of Europe are at last making their great mark as artists. Until now nearly all the art in Europe had clung pretty closely to the forms of art that had started around the Mediterranean. But Gothic art is a thing of northern birth. It sprang up first in the country around Paris, and the French were al-

ways most illustrious in it; though in the thirteenth century, and through the fourteenth and the fifteenth, it spread all over Europe.

In part we owe Gothic art to the Norman blood in the north of France. The Normans were great builders, and Gothic was first of all a remarkable new method of building.



Photos by Alinari and Ollivier

The statue of the Virgin, above, comes from the north portal of the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, and belongs to the end of the thirteenth century. She once held in her arms a figure of the Christ Child—now lost—and her face is glowing with motherly pride. To the right is the famous statue of St. Theodore from the cathedral of Chartres—it also is of the thirteenth century. Scholars believe him to have been a Greek soldier, an early Christian martyr whose head was reverently brought to Chartres as a sacred relic early in the twelfth century. But the artist has not clothed him in the costume he would have worn when he was alive; he is dressed as were the knights that lived in the time of St. Louis, and he is the true image of the perfect knight of chivalry.



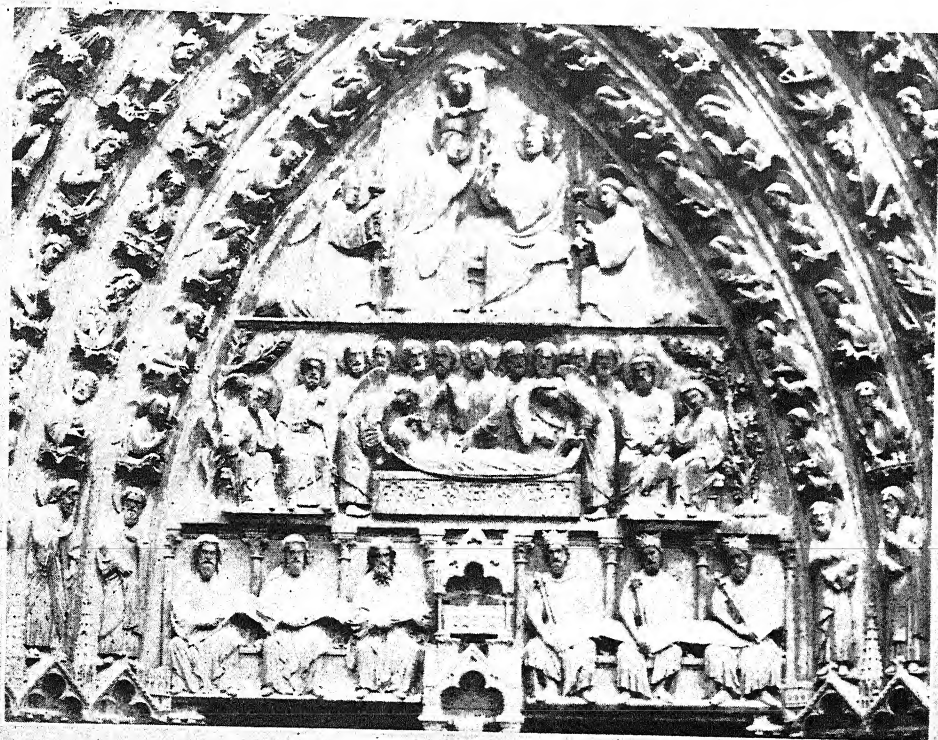


Photo by Alinari

Notre Dame in Paris is truly the church of the Virgin. Four of the six great portals of the cathedral are devoted entirely to her. The sculpture above is from the left portal of the façade. In the center is the Resurrection of the Virgin. For it is said that the Virgin never died; she fell asleep and angels carried her to

Heaven. Grouped about her tomb are the apostles, one of whom, Peter, you will know from the key he carries. Above is the Coronation. The Virgin sits beside Christ, and an angel leans out of the clouds to crown her. Below are kings of Israel and prophets. All around are saints and angels.

Even in Gothic decoration the idea of building was uppermost. The sculpture of the thirteenth century is made to fit in with the strong, straight lines of the churches where it found its place. Everything is planned in terms of slender, soaring stone.

#### Art in the Cathedral of Chartres

Let us look at some of the art in the cathedral of Chartres. We begin with that noble building because it is in many ways the greatest of French cathedrals, and also because it shows the beginnings of Gothic. Its western doors were carved as early as 1150. Indeed, these doors are a link between Romanesque carving and the Gothic carving of the rest of the cathedral, which was finished in the next century.

These three vast doorways, with their wide arches reaching, in the Gothic fashion, to a

point at the top, lead into a great church that soars toward and seems to lift the universe up with it to the glory of God. The Romanesque churches had shown pictures of little except Heaven and hell. The Gothic ones bring in all the good things of this earth to the glory of the Lord.

For those eager Normans who had overrun so much of Europe had settled down by the thirteenth century and made themselves at home. Their days of learning how to live and govern were now over, and they had time to sit back and think about this very interesting world in which we live.

#### How the Great Cathedral Was Built

Just as people fell to thinking about the wonders of this world, there came a man like St. Francis to tell them how beautiful it really is. He and his friars went all through the

countryside telling of the love of God for all living things, including the birds and the beasts and the flowers. St. Francis said that people must prepare themselves for life in Heaven by loving the good life that has been given to them on this earth, and by making it a beautiful thing. That is an important fact in Gothic art.

Another important thing is that the Gothic age was an age of towns. The great feudal castles and abbeys had done their work in organizing the European world. In the thirteenth century many people were leaving their farms and becoming merchants, buying and selling in centers of trade. They were building up the towns, and as a town grew it wanted a great church of its own—a town church or cathedral. This was a public enterprise, and everyone would have a share in it. The stone carvers would make statues for the church; while other guilds of craftsmen would make the stained glass, put together the wonderful windows, paint the carvings with bright colors, and do all other things to beautify the church. Each guild, or group of traders, would collect money to give a window. We can still see the sign of the fur merchants in the window of Chartres that pictures the story of Roland. Even if a man could do nothing else he could at least hitch himself

to a cart and draw stone for the building.

Even a great noble might do that very thing; and the proud Queen Eleanor herself was not ashamed to do her share in it.

The people put their very lives into the cathedral, in the cause of faith and in the cause of art. Every stone stands for someone's eager contribution; and the stones that bear the carvings tell the story of that effort in pictures that we all may see to-day. There



Photo by Giraudon, Paris

These weather-beaten heads come from the Royal Portal of Chartres, and were made in the twelfth century. The scene is the Visitation; to the left is Elizabeth and to the right is the Virgin, wearing a crown.

we may find pictures of the whole universe as men knew it in those days.

Indeed, it is not too much to say that to the people of the thirteenth century the universe itself was like a vast cathedral, made in many shapes and of many materials, but all fitted marvelously together for the praise of God. Every human being in it was like some bit of the great edifice, and everyone must fill his own place and station or else damage the mighty work. In that spirit the people built those mighty works of fine art that we call Gothic cathedrals.

Now let us go back to Chartres, where we began. First, in the center of the main doorway we see a carving of Christ in glory, as we should have found it in Romanesque churches. On the columns that support the arches stand the tall figures of kings and queens from the Old Testament. Their long



Photo by Giraudon, Paris

This figure of Christ comes from the southern portal of Chartres. His right hand is raised in blessing, and in the left is a book of the Gospels. He tramples upon a lion and a dragon, as is foretold in the Book of Psalms.

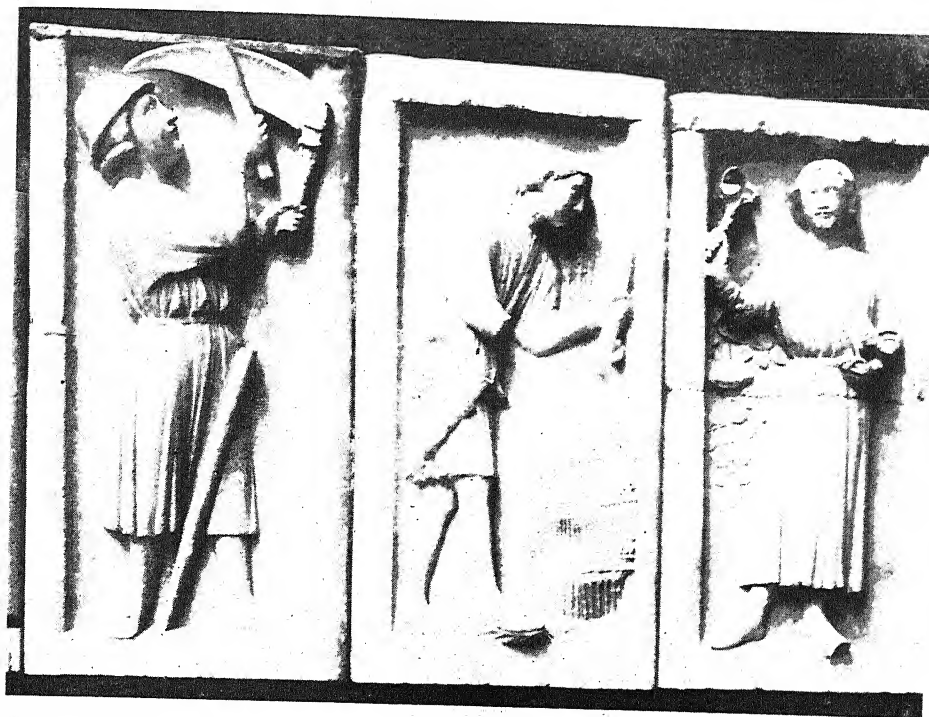


Photo by Ollivier, Paris

These charming scenes come from the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, and were made in the thirteenth century. The man to the right, who holds a budding branch in his right hand and a falcon on his left, is a young nobleman. He represents the month of May, for May was the month of noblemen. When the first bright weather came, the baron left his gloomy castle to go a-Maying. Or, with his falcon on his wrist, he

went out to hunt with his horses and dogs. The man to the left, who busily sharpens his scythe, represents the month of July, for with July comes the beginning of the harvest. August continues the harvesting, and therefore the peasant in the center is hard at work gathering in his crops. Thus, on the churches of France the busy life of the Middle Ages is often shown in a continuous story, month by month.

bodies and the fine, straight lines of their garments almost make them look like columns themselves. But the faces are the faces of people like you and me.

#### Fine Art for the House of God

Like you and me! For as we all had our share in building this mighty church, we are all going to appear in its art, in one way or another. There are carvings of all the things an ordinary man does as he goes about his business in the thirteenth century. In April he goes out in the country to pick the first flowers. In July he harvests his grain, and at other times he does many other things that can be put into carven pictures. It is all good work to the glory of the Lord, and is all put into fine art for the house of God. At the sides of the cathedral there are more

great doors. On the cold north side are pictures of the Old Testament and of the life of the Virgin Mary. These represent the winter of the world before the coming of Christ. Every figure carries something to tell you who he is—St. Peter has his keys, and David his crown and scepter.

Since the coming of Christ brought joy to the world, the stories of his life are put in the sunshine of the south portal. Here it is that the friendly St. Theodore stands, too. Crusaders coming to the church to pray before their long journey looked up to him and asked his protection.

#### How Carvings Tell a Story

And all around are a multitude of carvings of all the kinds of people who shared in this great work of building—the scholar with his



book, the knight with his falcon, the farmer with his scythe. Everyone is there, and any person looking on may feel, "There I am. I belong also to this holy place."

Such was the art of sculpture in the great Gothic cathedrals. It was international, for it spread all over the Western world. But it was nearly always at its best in France, where it originated. Never since has the French nation done anything so splendid in art as it did in its cathedrals six or seven centuries ago. But England, Germany, Spain, and Italy all did noble work in Gothic.

In the early thirteenth century statues the body of the figure may not seem very life-like. It is the face that is alive and looks like a real person. In due time the sculptors learned how to make the whole figure more real. The persons turn and talk to one another. The angel on the cathedral of Reims (răNs) greets Mary with a smile that shows he has glad news to tell. How friendly these faces are! They are simple and serene, though never commonplace. The thirteenth century sculptors felt the power and the majesty of God so

much that they learned to put a great deal of majesty and power into stone. The "Beautiful God" of Amiens (ă'myăN'), as people love to call the statue, is full of this majesty. And yet the carving looks very simple.

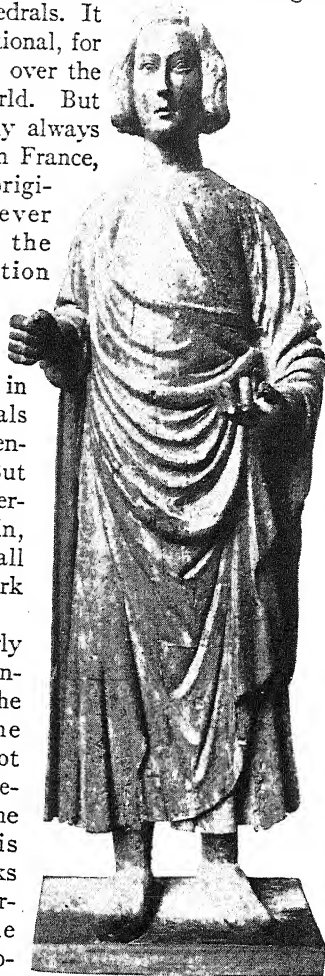
These Gothic statues are made of rough building stone. One cannot model it so softly as Greek marble. Yet despite the coarseness of their material, the Gothic sculptors learned to model a face full of vigor with a few strokes of the chisel, and to make drapery that falls in long, quiet lines.

Sometimes the statue is a portrait of a real person, perhaps one of the kings of France. But the most usual place to find

real portraits is on the tombs in the churches. Over these tombs are the figures of the knights and ladies who sleep below. We can tell the crusaders, like Robert of Normandy, from the fact that they have their legs crossed to show that they have been on a crusade to the Holy Land.

And these artists had a fine sense of humor, with great skill in grotesque carving. They would carve grinning goblins and weird animals even on

the holiest buildings, often on the jutting waterspouts and sometimes in other places as well. These are the famous "gargoyles" that make up strange decorations in so many medieval churches. High above the ground, atop the towers of the cathedral in Paris,



Above is the statue of a king, carved out of wood in the thirteenth century. To the right is the "Beautiful God" of Amiens. One hand is raised in blessing; the other holds a book of the Gospels. Bishops to-day always give their blessing with two fingers extended, just as this celebrated figure is doing.



## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Ollivier, Paris

And what are the strange, forbidding creatures that cluster about the buttresses of our medieval churches, and crane their gaunt necks from the tops of towers? The people who are always trying to read meaning into the sculptures of the medieval church are quite at a loss when it comes to these gargoyles, for there is nothing to explain their presence—unless we read in them pure fancy. They may belong to the host of

fairies, gnomes, and other fearsome creatures which people were—and are to-day—so fond of telling one another about in the long, still evenings. But not all are forbidding; some are quite jolly. The builders of churches who told sacred stories and everyday fables in carvings, might well have wanted to include these strange creatures, too. The gargoyles above come from Notre Dame in Paris. They are reconstructions.



Photo by Ollivier, Paris

This charming tapestry was made in the sixteenth century. It tells the story of St. Rémi, who was so well loved and so celebrated that he is said to have become archbishop of Reims at the age of twenty-two. In the picture above, you may see him heading a procession and carrying his bishop's staff. Or, to the upper left, you may see him sitting at a table feeding some little birds, visitors from the fields. For he was

such a gentle saint that the birds flew right into his house to eat out of the palm of his hand and to charm him with their sweet songs. The scene below this one tells another famous story. One day when St. Rémi was at the house of a gentlewoman, he discovered that his hostess was out of wine. The saint went straight down to the cellar, blessed the wine barrel, and soon the whole cellar was flooded with wine!

we may see some of the weirdest of them gloating over the city.

But sculpture was not the only fine art in the cathedral. A large part of a Gothic cathedral was not stone, but glass. The builders found out that they could make larger and larger windows, and since everything was colored in those days, the windows too were given glorious colors. Back in the twelfth century craftsmen had learned to put color into the molten liquid that was to become glass, and so to turn their handiwork to a deep blue or a rich red. Then they cut and

fitted the pieces of colored glass together to make wonderful pictures. They bound it all together with lead strips, and set it up in the windows of their Romanesque churches—little churches that were to look so small and timid later.

#### Visions in Colored Glass

By the thirteenth century these gifted craftsmen were making enormous windows all ablaze with color. When it was dark you saw nothing at all, but when the sun shone, it lighted up the glorious deep blues, reds,



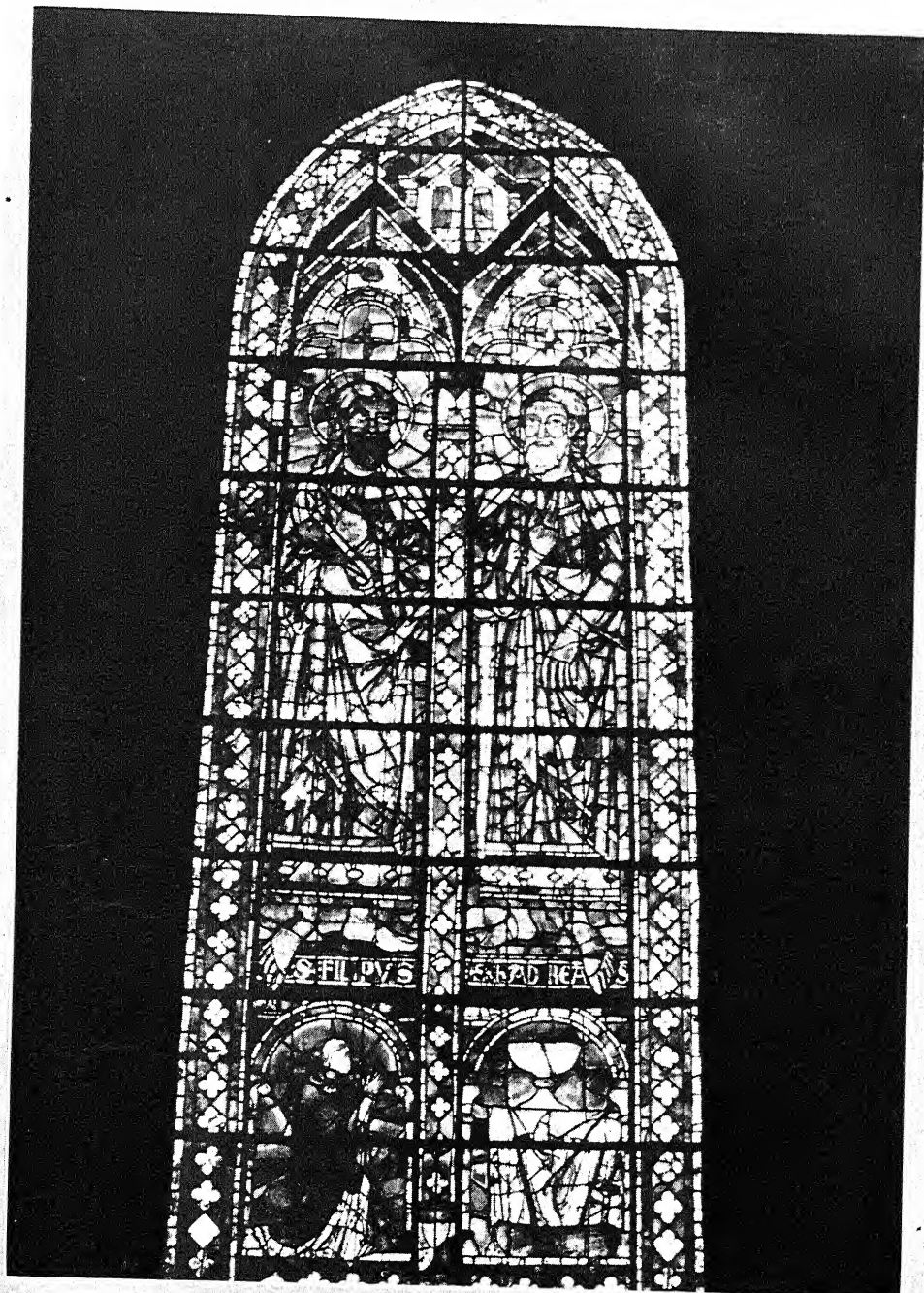


Photo by Ollivier, Paris

Tiny bits of stained glass as brightly colored and as beautiful as gems were bound together with strips of lead to make the gorgeous windows of the Gothic church. The stained-glass window above comes from

the cathedral of Chartres, and shows the stately figures of St. Phillip and St. Andrew. Below to the right is a chalice, and to the left is the kneeling figure of the priest who gave the window.





Photo by Giraudon, Paris

These exquisite little scenes come from Gothic miniatures. To the left is the Marriage at Cana, where the first miracle—the changing of water into wine—was performed. The figures with haloes are the Virgin

and Christ. The picture at the right shows the Marriage of the Virgin. Notice the lacy Gothic arches which appear in each of the pictures, and the tiny scenes painted into the capital letters of the text.

purples, and yellows, and showed you a vision of the Virgin or a great picture of Roland blowing his horn. Still more beautiful it was when the moon came and made lovely, ghostly colors into a wonderful dream of what you had seen in the sunlight.

#### The Glory of the Gothic Church

A Gothic church did not have much space for pictures except in the windows. Yet when there was room there would be paintings on the walls, or brilliant pictures in tapestry woven out of colored wools and hung against the stone.

And there were always paintings in the books of the church, many of them very bright and beautiful. The whole church was one vast work of art; grounded in the art of architecture, it drew in all the other arts to make it glorious.

But the fine arts in these later Middle Ages were by no means all confined to the church. In its eager faith the thirteenth

century had filled Europe with cathedrals, and the work of building and completing them went on into the centuries that followed. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the builders and artists had their paths fully cleared for them.

In addition to great public enterprises like the making of cathedrals, the arts now go to court and enter the service of the great lords of the land—each of whom now likes to have his own painter and sculptor. The artists now are often favorite courtiers as they make their dainty and graceful pictures of fair ladies and chivalric knights.

#### How Art Changed

So the art of the fourteenth century is gay and gracious, but it has less of majesty than before. The artists could not do such figures as that of the "Beautiful God" at Amiens, of which we spoke. Instead, they now make their figures of Christ constantly more human, with gay smiles in times of joy or with

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suffering such as any man might show in times of agony. proud king's face was his nose, and the artists thought they ought to carve and paint the nose as it was. They are greatly interested, not so much in any ideal face, but in the little things that make one real face so different from another. Since the statue of this king stands almost with a little stoop, and with its great nose above a kindly mouth, we know that these artists were not afraid of their king.

Very interesting are the people we now meet in carving and pictures, for these are often real portraits of real persons. The other northern peoples who learned Gothic art from France wanted to show their own lives in their works of art. In Germany they often tried harder to show human feeling than to make a beautiful statue. In Flanders the art is solid and just a bit homely. In that rich little land of thrifty merchants, the art was as honest as the people.

Of all the men who had to do with art in these centuries, we could hardly do better than to meet four brothers—four rulers who were also great patrons of the arts in their time. They are Charles V of France; Louis, the duke of Anjou (*ôN'-zhôô'*); Philip, duke of Burgundy; and John, duke of Berry (*bër'rê'*). Among them they own most of France and Belgium, with nearly all the art in those lands.

In our portrait of Charles V we see something different from the delicate pictures of many a knight and lady of just a little while before. It is clear that the main feature of the

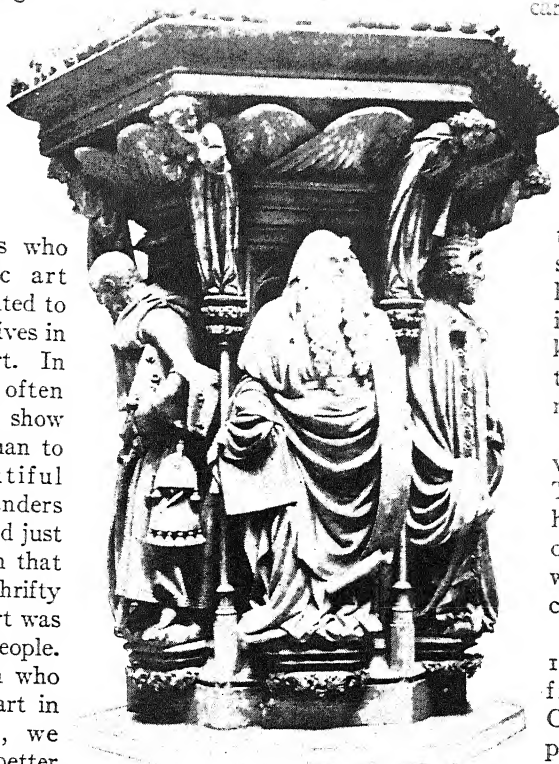


Photo by Ollivier, Paris

The so-called "wellhead" of Claus Sluter, made for the Duke of Burgundy's monastery near Dijon, was really a base for a "calvary." Above were Christ on the cross, the Virgin, Mary Magdalene, and St. John—all lost long since, save the head of Christ. The base of the calvary still exists and is shown above. It stands to-day, strangely enough, in a well in a garden of the lunatic asylum which has been built on the site of the ruined monastery. About it are the six prophets who foretold the sufferings of Christ, and above these are sorrowing angels. How magnificent this sculpture must have been when the figures were all there, before its color and gold were worn off! Moses, who is the central figure in the picture above, is the most famous of the sculptures. People have seen in him a mixture of the godlike and the human. His strength, they say, is the wild strength of a lion or a bull—and they point to his splendid beard, which looks so much like a lion's mane, and to the bull's horns which sprout from his head. Do you know how Moses got his horns? In the Bible, you may remember, we are told that beams of light came from Moses' head. They were so bright that the prophet had to keep his head covered except when he was in the presence of the Lord. Now in some early play, Moses probably appeared with things sprouting from his head—things that were meant to look like beams of light, but really looked more like horns. It would not take long for the idea to get about that Moses had horns. And so, because of this strange mistake, Claus Sluter put horns on his statue of Moses, and Michelangelo did the same for his famous Moses many years later.

Louis of Anjou was very fond of tapestries. The chief treasure that he left us is a great set of tapestry pictures wonderfully bright in color.

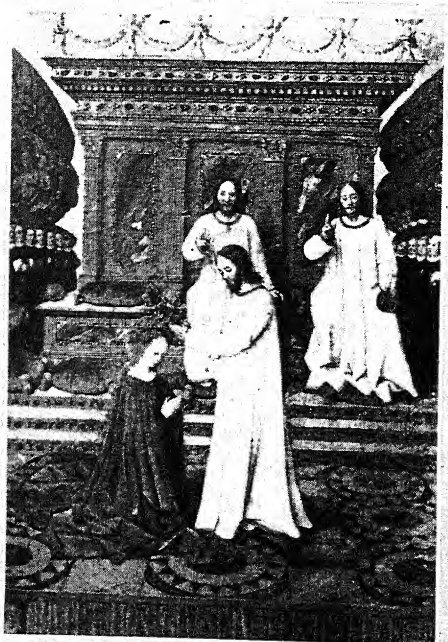
They were ordered in 1373. Louis borrowed from his brother Charles a book with pictures of St. John's dream of heaven, and showed it to the painter. "Make me tapestries," he said, "with pictures like these." So the chapel in the Duke's palace at Angers (*ôN'zhâ'*) was hung with great pictures woven in deep blue and bright rich red.

The Duke of Burgundy in those days was also the ruler of that part of Belgium which is called Flanders. Flanders is a northern country, with sober folk who like to look at life as it is. This suited the taste of the times, and we find that



Above and below are some of the entrancing scenes from John of Berry's Book of Hours. In these and other scenes from the book we may see, exquisite in every detail, tiny castles and fortresses that must be true portraits of the marvelous buildings of fifteenth century France. Here are peasants at work, and gaily dressed lords out riding and hunting—all real people.

To the left above is a view of Paris as the beautiful city looked over five hundred years ago. It is as though we were looking into a magic mirror that could reflect the past. And the present too!—for, at the right, we can shiver with the hooded person out in the snow, and feel warm again with the woman who lifts her skirts to warm her ankles by the fire.



Photos by Ollivier, Giraudon, and Musee Condee, Chantilly

To the left is the Coronation of the Virgin. To the right are the Three Kings who, coming from different parts of the East and followed by their noblemen, servants, hunting leopards, and pet dogs, have met

in gorgeous array to follow the star to Bethlehem. But what is the great city in the distance? Surely it must be Paris again, with the towers of Notre Dame rising in its midst!

Richard's Topical Examples



## THE HISTORY OF ART

the Duke of Burgundy had many Flemish artists.

This duke of Burgundy wanted a handsome tomb. He built a whole monastery on the spot where he wanted to be buried, in order that his grave might never be lonely and neglected. Two Flemish artists worked on the tomb and the buildings around it—John of Marville (mār'vël') and Claus Sluter (klō slü'tēr'). How different the portal of the church they built from that of Chartres! The figures stand out all by themselves and scarcely seem to belong to the building.

### A Trick of the Burgundian Sculptors

We have lost the Duke's tomb, but we have the "wellhead" that stood in the center of the courtyard, carved with figures by Claus Sluter. What a great strong person his Moses is, and how heavily his cloak hangs!

One of the favorite tricks of these Burgundian sculptors—a trick they used on the lost tomb of the Duke—was to surround the tomb with figures of mourners. The mourners have deep cowls over their heads, and you can see only a black shadow where the face should be. On the tomb of the Grand Senechal (sēn'ē-shāl) of Burgundy the stone figure of the dead man is carried by the stooping figures of these mourners.

### The Tranquil Figures of Colombe

The work of these Burgundian sculptors is so real as to be almost depressing. It makes us feel heavy and sad. The sculptor who came after them, with the graceful name of Michel Colombe (mē'shēl' kō'lōMb'), felt the same way about their work. He had had enough of mourners, and he made pleasant, tranquil figures instead. Yet his tranquillity is not the tranquillity of the thirteenth century. For a great deal has happened since that time, and people cannot go back and feel as they might have felt two hundred years before. They must look at their own world with their own eyes.

Michel Colombe left us a figure of a lady who seems pensive over the end of the Gothic age. Thirteenth century Gothic was, above all, French. The fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries belong especially to Italy and Flanders. We must soon go and see the great new things that were happening there. But first we will say farewell to France by speaking of the last one of these four brothers and of a wonderful book.

We should be especially interested in the portrait of the Duke of Berry because he was the greatest patron of the arts among all the four brothers. The things that come from his collections are always especially beautiful and gracious. His interests spread all over Europe, and from him we may catch glimpses of what was going on in Italy and Flanders.

On New Year's Day in the year 1415 three artist brothers who worked for the Duke presented him solemnly with a book. It was beautifully bound in rich colors, and the Duke opened it with great expectations—only to find that it was a dummy book, with nothing inside at all!

### How a New World of Art Began

The fact that the Duke enjoyed the joke tells a good deal about him. He was very fond of his artists, and allowed them to be intimate with him. He was always ready to get them out of scrapes.

But these brothers—they came from Limburg—did not always make dummy books. They made the pictures for one of the most beautiful books that was ever put together for the Duke. They were Flemish by birth, but they had studied in Paris and in Italy. And in that wonderful book of theirs we shall find an influence from all three countries, because by now art has learned to love going on travels.

So we find many different ways of seeing the world, all in one book. For Europe is now full of new ideas. There are so many of them that it is hard to know where to begin studying them. But for a hundred years or more down in Italy there has been a stir of mighty wings. A new world of art is coming into being, to replace all the centuries of the art of the Middle Ages. The new art will be that of the Renaissance, with Italy for its mother. Of that triumphant world of art we must tell on a later page.



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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 10

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### THE FATHERS OF MODERN ART

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- The Renaissance was a movement in the fine arts, 11-107  
Why Pisano's sculptures looked like old Romans come to life, 11-108  
How Giotto led painting back to Nature's own forms, 11-111  
Why Florence was to be the art center of Italy and of all the world, 11-113  
There were two ways of painting: "tempera" and "fresco," 11-114  
"Splendid people gravely occupied with solemn acts," 11-118  
The problem that Giotto solved: How shall a picture on a flat surface be made to look solid and round? 11-118  
The artists of Sienna clung to the old Byzantine ways, 11-120

#### *Things to Think About*

- Why had Greek and Roman art "gone out of fashion"?  
What had the teachings of Saint Francis to do with the work of Giotto?  
What had the bright Italian sunshine to do with art?  
How did Giotto produce the great feeling in his works?

#### *Related Material*

- Erasmus, a molder of Renaissance thought, 13-82-83  
Two great poets, Dante and Petrarch, 13-59, 61  
A great Florentine story-teller, Boccaccio, 13-63  
The invention of printing and the Renaissance, 10-48  
The history of the Renaissance in England, 6-57; in Italy, 6-30; in Florence, 13-60  
The Renaissance in architecture, 11-481-93

#### *Practical Applications*

- The wonderful advances that were made in composition by Giotto at the beginning of the Renaissance are something to be grateful for when we try to paint or draw to-day.

#### *Summary Statement*

- Giotto, an intense student of nature, was the first painter in nearly a thousand years to paint people who seemed to stand up with some weight on their feet and who had flesh and bones beneath their clothes.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



Photo by Chauffourier, Rome

It was a sarcophagus very much like this one that inspired Niccola Pisano to try his hand at deep relief and rounded modeling. This Roman sculpture tells the same legend as the one Niccola saw—the story of

Meleager, who, with many famous heroes of Greece, set out to kill a monstrous boar which Diana had sent to ravage the fields of Calydon. Atalanta, whom you see at the right of the hero, was one of the party.

## The FATHERS of MODERN ART

*This Is Mainly the Story of the Famous Giotto, Who Stands at the Threshold of Italian Painting in All Its Glory*

**I**N STORY after story in these volumes we have told the history of fine art from the time when some wild men drew their pictures on the caves in Spain, down through the days of Greek and Roman artists, and on down through the Romanesque and Gothic art of the Middle Ages. We now come to the end of those Middle Ages and to the beginnings of our modern world in the great movement that is known as the Renaissance (rĕn'ĕ-sôNs'). Now above all other things the Renaissance was a movement in the fine arts, that is, in painting, drawing, sculpture, and architecture; and at this point our story will grow fuller than it has ever been before.

Where shall we say the Renaissance began? No one knows the moment, naturally, for there was no one single moment of its birth. But let us start with two pieces of fine art and see what they will tell us about the beginnings of the great movement and about what the movement meant.

One of the two is a picture of St. Francis feeding the birds, and the other is the carven

pulpit in the cathedral at Pisa (pĕ'zâ). Each is a signpost on the road to the Italian Renaissance. We may take the Pisan pulpit first.

We are in Pisa about the year 1230. Up in France men are building the vast Gothic cathedrals, but in Italy they still have more love for the older Romanesque (rô'măn-ĕsk') and Byzantine (bĭ-zăn'tĭn) forms of art. In fact, the Gothic art never really conquered in Italy so fully as it did in the rest of Europe. The cathedral here in Pisa is Romanesque.

A ray of sunlight steals through the window and falls on a tomb. It catches the eye of Niccola Pisano (pĕ-zâ'nô) and draws it to the carving on the sepulcher, and all at once the man's face lights up with a new idea.

What Niccola saw was just an old Roman carving. There was nothing strange in that, for Italy was full of relics of the Greeks and Romans. But it had simply gone out of fashion to look at those old pieces of art, or to admire them. That is the way it is, only

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too often, in the history of any art—when one style is in high fashion, any other style may look a little foolish. And the art in style now was the Byzantine. Now and then, to be sure, somebody would like a piece of old Roman carving he had found and put it on a tomb or in a wall. The carving on this tomb was one of a man chasing a boar.

It was a fine piece of work—far finer than anything the Italian sculptors like Niccola were doing. But it was all out of style, and moreover it was pagan—that is, it belonged to non-Christian times. For the man chasing the boar was Meleager (mél'è-à'jër), out of Greek mythology.

But Niccola the sculptor was eager for such solid form in carving as he now saw—solid form around which you could put your finger, as against the flatter Byzantine kind. That ray of sunlight showed him the kind of carving for which stone seemed to be made.

Incidentally, do not forget the ray of sunshine. The sunshine has a great deal to do with the Italian art about which we are going to talk. The sun is very bright in Italy, and its rays do not just stay outdoors; they burst in and flood everything. They made the shadows of that old carving look

wonderfully deep, and for centuries to come they showed the Italian sculptors the bright lights and the deep shadows in the stone they were carving.

For the painters the sunshine did even more. It threw bright colors over all the

world for the painters to catch and put into their pictures, and it made the colors in those pictures more luminous than they would have been in any northern land. If you want to know what sunshine does for painters, just look at almost any scene in an Italian painting and then at almost any in fine painting from a misty land like Holland.

So Niccola Pisano, aided by the sunshine, gave birth to a new idea for sculpture, and he put the idea into the pulpit he carved for the cathedral at Pisa. When you look at the pulpit you can see how he has been studying the old Roman carving. The figures look

like old Romans come to life. Some of them, indeed, are copied from the tomb he had been looking at.

Now Niccola did not start the Renaissance all by himself. No one man ever starts so vast a movement. But in one way or another the thing that happened to him began to happen to a great many other people in

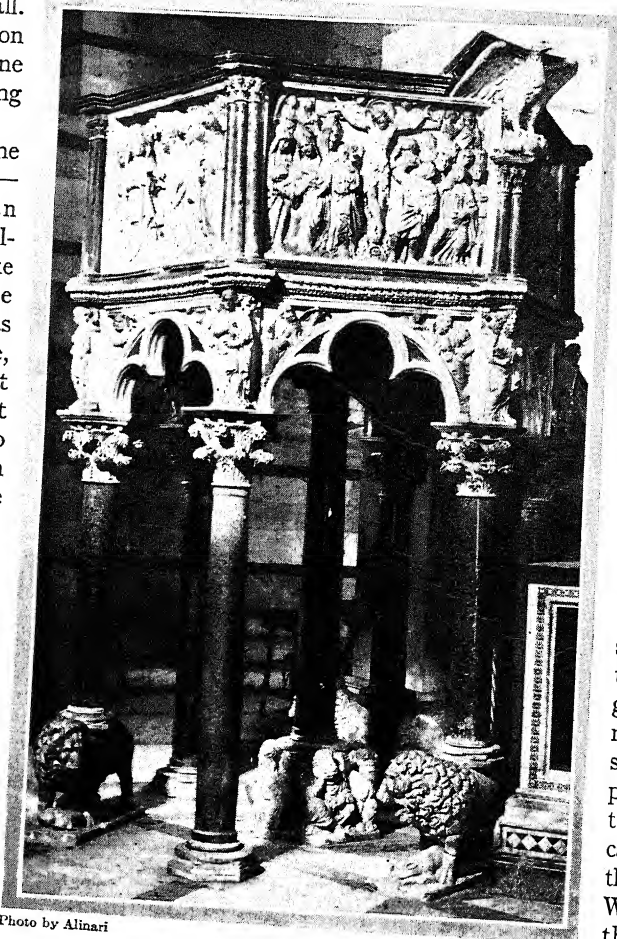


Photo by Alinari

The sculptured pulpit in this picture stands in the baptistery at Pisa, and shows the wonderful work of Niccola Pisano. Its six panels, resting on graceful arches and columns that rise from the floor or from the backs of lions, are carved with scenes from the life of Christ.

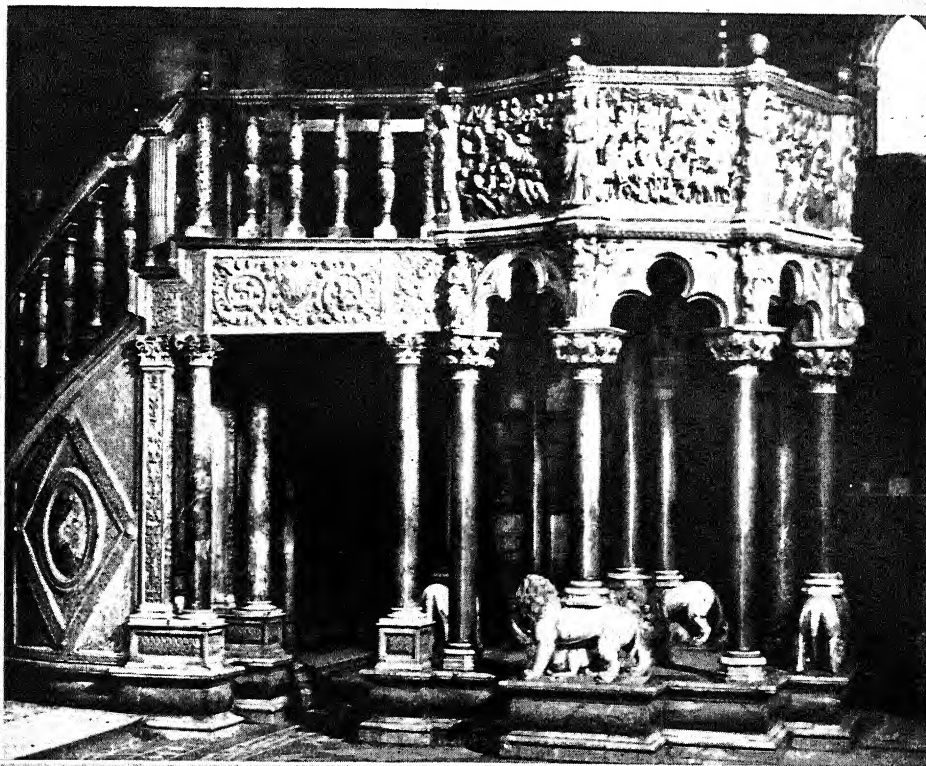


Photo by Alinari

Niccola Pisano made two pulpits, one at Pisa and one that is more magnificent but so heavy with carving that it is less pleasing than his first. Niccola's son

Giovanni helped him make the second, and so we find in it touches of the Gothic style that Giovanni was so fond of. It is in Siena, and is shown above.

the arts—and that did start the Renaissance. At the very beginning, most people did not take up with Niccola's new ideas. His own son Giovanni liked the Gothic art of France better than his father's Roman ways; and when the two of them worked together on another pulpit, at Siena (syě'nä), their carving was a sort of mixture of old Roman and new Gothic.

#### How St. Francis Influenced Art

But we started with two works of art, and the other was a picture of St. Francis of Assisi (äs-sě'zē). Now St. Francis too had a good deal to do with the Renaissance, though he never was an artist. He was an inspired saint and preacher who taught men to love the wonder and the beauty of this world while they are traveling through it to the next one. So much did he love the

world that God had made that he went out and preached to the birds, calling them his "little brothers." And that was a really strange thing for a man to do so many centuries ago.

Now we mentioned St. Francis before, when we were talking about Gothic art in France. We said that he had something to do with that art, and it is true. For the Gothic artists in France took up his ideas about the beauties of nature, and put these into statues and pictures, even before the Italians of the early Renaissance did the same thing. But after all, St. Francis was Italian, and he had his share of influence in the Italian art of the Renaissance.

If you will look up this word Renaissance in the dictionary you will find that it literally means "rebirth," and you will probably find that it is defined as a rebirth of Greek and



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Roman art and culture. But that is by no means all the story. The Renaissance is also a new birth of energy in the arts, as in all life—an awakening of many minds to all the wonders of this world to which St. Francis had helped to open the eyes of man. It is like the Gothic art in its interest in real people and real things. It is Greek and Roman because Greek and Roman art had always had a home in Italy. Italy was Roman, after all, and that is why Italians had never really fallen captive to the northern art of the Gothic ages. And now they were opening their eyes to the marvel of the world around them, and anew to the marvel of the arts in the older world of Greece and Rome—above all, of Rome.

The fact that Italians had never felt quite at home in the Gothic architecture that came from France is an important one for Italian painting. Gothic architecture has no walls when it can do without them. It opens up into windows everywhere, and the windows are all pictures in stained glass. The Italians loved to have walls, but they wanted them in color. They wanted painted walls. And that is why there is so much painting in Italy at this time, and so little in France.

### When the Art of Painting Came to Life Again

St. Francis was made a saint very soon after his death, and a great church was built over his tomb at Assisi. To decorate the church artists were called from all over Italy. Now probably the great painter in Italy about 1300 was Cimabue (chē'mā-bōō'ā). He is hardly much more than a famous name to us now, for we have very few of his paintings left. Those we still have

make us think of the stiff old Byzantine pictures in mosaic. The paintings he did in the church at Assisi are so battered that we can hardly see them, but their stiff figures seem to twist about as if Cimabue were trying to put life into them and yet did not dare to depart from the old ways in painting.

Some of the painters living in Rome, in the midst of so many old carvings, had been studying them as Niccola of Pisa did, and one of these painters also worked at Assisi. His pictures there are not so stiff as those of Cimabue, and they show that his eye had been on the Roman carvings. But even so the pictures do not manage to come to life.

But the art of painting did come to life in Tuscany (tūs'kā-nī), with a boy who was born in a hamlet near the city of Florence. This boy was a child of genius who somehow knew the way to draw a lamb just as it was in life. The story goes that one day the great Cimabue, passing along

the road on his way to Bologna (bō-lōn'yā), saw this boy sitting on the ground and drawing the figure of a lamb on a stone. The great painter was astonished to see how the child had learned to see things in nature and to put them into pictures.

He asked the boy's name, and was told, "My name is Giotto." He went at once to the boy's father and asked if he might have the child. The father was poor, and Cimabue was famous; and it all ended with the father's putting Giotto (jōt'tō) in the charge of Cimabue, to be a pupil and to grow into an artist. It was with this Giotto that we may say the art of painting came to life again.

What was it he did to make us say this of him? Well, before his time the painters had



Photo by Alinari

This fine carving of the Virgin and Child is the work of Giovanni Pisano. Giovanni, who was an architect as well as a sculptor, had been taught by his famous father, Niccola. The work of father and son is very much alike except that Giovanni was able to make the cold stone give out more movement and life.



Photo by Rischgita

When Cimabue had finished his painting of the "Madonna and Child with Angels"—the largest altarpiece that had ever been made—the Florentines, gaily

dressed, as you see them here, and accompanied by trumpeters, carried the painting in joyful procession from the artist's workshop to the church.

been taking their ideas from old Rome and old Byzantium (bǐ-zǎn'shǐ-ūm). But now they were facing new problems in a changing world. Here, for instance, was this church of St. Francis, and of course the story of St. Francis must be painted in it. Old Rome and old Byzantium could show how to make pictures of ancient senators or ancient saints, but what could they do for St. Francis? He was just a man of Assisi who was still remembered by all sorts of people there for his dusty brown habit and his radiant face. He was a real person who lived here in this very place, and right over there was the hill where he preached to the birds. Were they going to make a stiff and lifeless figure of a man like that?

#### The Boy Who Studied Art from Nature

Now when St. Francis was preaching to the birds he surely had no notion that he was leaving his mark on the history of painting. Yet when he called the little birds his brothers, it was a declaration that all nature was worth loving and worth talking about; and when nature was worth talking about, it was certainly worth painting and carving. For a long time people had been a little afraid that it was not—that nothing was worth painting unless it was very important, like the joy of heaven or the terror of hell. But now plain human beings were coming to

seem important too; and so were beasts and birds and flowers; and pretty soon people began to realize how much they had been wanting to make pictures of these things all along.

Cimabue had some glimpses of what the new art was going to be, and the story goes that he noticed especially how the boy Giotto had "studied his art from nature." But Cimabue died before his work at Assisi was completed.

Then the work of painting the church of St. Francis fell to Giotto. He had already been helping at Assisi. He had seen the work of the Roman painter there, and he had doubtless helped with some of Cimabue's paintings. He knew all the good old ways of doing things. But when he came to paint St. Francis he did not turn to Rome or to Byzantium. He turned to St. Francis and his birds.

#### The Stirring of a New Spirit

That is what we mean in saying that the art of painting came to life again with Giotto. There had been great painters before him, but he was the man who put his eye on nature and led painting back to nature's own forms. Of course, important as he is, Giotto did not start the Renaissance alone, any more than Niccola or St. Francis; we have just been using all three men as

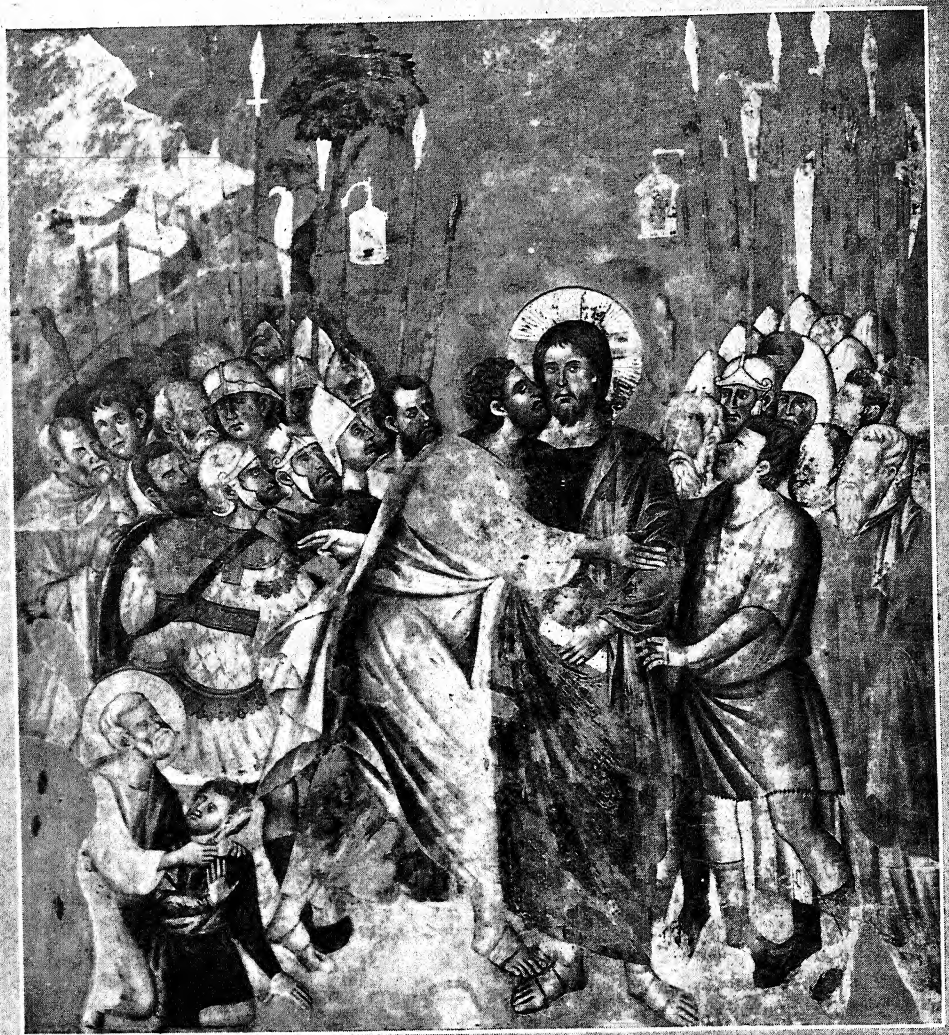


Photo by Alinari

This painting of the Taking of Christ belongs to the school of Cimabue, and is in the upper church at Assisi. Compare it with the picture on the opposite page, a painting of the same subject by Giotto, and you will see how Giotto won his fame. Above, the

figures are neither solid nor real; most of them seem paper-thin. The soldiers and apostles, so stiffly grouped on either side, have no real position in space. We could not walk among them, for they are like painted shadows that would melt away as we passed.

different examples of what was happening.

This Renaissance was to spread all through the world, just as Gothic art had spread before it. In the various lands it was going to take many forms. Beginning in the thirteenth century it gathered scope and ran its course all over Europe during the three centuries that followed. But first of all it was Italian, and with it Italy came into an art of her own for the first time since

the end of Rome. And a glorious art it was.

Now the way the people lived in Italy at that time had a great deal to do with the kind of art they made and loved. Italy was no one land, but a whole group of little countries, each with its own main city and its ruler. Each city was an envious rival of all others, and wanted to be finer than its neighbors. Some of the cities had grown very rich from trade, and they were all





Photo by Alinari

This painting by Giotto comes from the Arena chapel in Padua. To people of Giotto's day, who were used to the unlikeliest paintings of earlier artists, pictures like this one must have seemed more real than life itself. Here there was nothing left out that the be-

holder had to supply himself; he did not, as before, have to breathe life into shadows. Before him were massive figures, solid to the touch and each occupying the amount of space it should occupy. Giotto was the first to give people this sensation in looking at painting.

putting up great buildings and searching far and wide for painters and sculptors to make them beautiful. With some twenty cities in a fever of this work, it is no wonder that Renaissance Italy was so full of artists.

In the early days of the Renaissance the city of Florence was the chief center of art. It was nearer to a modern Athens than was any other place in Italy, or in the world. It had grown rich from the spices and embroideries, the gold and silver and wool, and all the other things that passed through its

markets. The leaders in the town would have fine houses in the city and fine villas for the summer in the charming country that lay around it. With wealth and leisure they had time to talk about many things, and perhaps most of all about the fine arts. Even the common people knew a good deal about art, just as they do in Paris to-day. When Cimabue's famous picture of the Madonna and Child was finished, they held a great procession to carry it to its place in the church. They all had a passion for their



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city, and a pride in making it beautiful.

So the painters and the sculptors found plenty to do in Florence. They kept big workshops to fill the orders that poured in. To those shops came talented boys from all round to learn the trade of painter or of sculptor—or both. The boys would mix paints and sharpen tools until they learned enough to do bits of their masters' work.

When they were fully trained they would start out for themselves as members of a guild, or organized group, of artists. Very often they were painters and sculptors and architects all at once, and possibly skilled in other arts as well; for in the Renaissance, more than at any other time in history, an artist was likely to be the master of many arts. A great painter might also do fine work as a goldsmith or might make splendid designs for tapestry. But the greatest of all arts in that time was painting. It is the chief of all the glories in the Italian Renaissance.

There were two great ways of painting—in “tempera” (tēm'pā-rā) and in “fresco” (frēs'-kō).

Most of the smaller pictures, such as those intended for the altar of a church, were painted in tempera, and on prepared panels of wood. For tempera the artist would mix, or “temper,” his ground colors with the yolk of eggs or some similar substance. This made a thick paint which dried to a smooth and lustrous surface. But the artist could not linger over his work. He had to plan it all in advance, exactly as he wanted it, and then put on his colors, once for all.

Larger paintings, on the plaster walls of buildings, were done in fresco. The word

means simply “fresh,” because the painting was put on fresh damp plaster. The colors were mixed with water only. Once the wall was dry the picture was done, and there was no way to alter it. So the artist had to do his work right the first time, or else scrape it all off and begin again. What he really did was to plaster only a small part at a time and then paint it before it dried. A single head would be a good day's painting.

In either of the methods the artist had to plan every detail before he ever dipped a brush in paint. Often his client did a good deal of the planning ahead of him. When the client ordered the picture he might say just how many people he wanted in it, just what colors, and just how long the artist must take for the work. And that probably made the task all the harder—the task of making something beautiful out of what the client demanded.

And now let us go back to Giotto working in the shop of Cimabue in that lovely city of Florence which was just beginning to become one of the finest in all

Italy. When he grew up, Giotto was to have a great share in making Florence what it was and still remains. But of his earliest days there we have hardly any record except for a few stories.

### Cimabue and the Fly

One of the stories must be told. It says that one day Cimabue came into his studio and found a fly settled right on the nose of a figure he was painting. He threw out his hand to brush away the fly, but the fly did not budge. Then he saw that the thing was



Photo by Alinari

This famous portrait of Dante may be the work of Giotto, for we know that the two great men, poet and artist, were known to each other. But many believe that Giotto did not paint it at all—or that if he did, some one of his followers repainted it later.

## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Alinari

This is Giotto's "Meeting of St. Joachim and St. Anna at Jerusalem." The meeting is a happy one; the old man and his wife embrace each other tenderly, and their friends come smiling through the gate to greet

them. How skillfully the figures are grouped to make a beautifully balanced composition—and yet how simply! Few painters have ever been able to do it better. The gateway makes a fine frame.



One of Giotto's greatest accomplishments is his fascinating way of making his people look thoroughly happy or sad. In the picture above, St. Joachim is returning to the sheepfold. The saint is very sad. How do we know that he is sad? His face shows us

very little, but his bowed head, his drooping figure, and his heavy, heavy drapery tell the whole story. The landscape of this picture is very simple—scarcely more than a suggestion of rocks and trees. Giotto was always more interested in his figures.



Photo by Alinari

One day—so the story goes—as St. Francis was walking past a field, he noticed that the trees by the wayside were filled with a multitude of birds. "Wait for me," he said to his companions; "I will go and preach to my little sisters the birds." And so the saint went into the field and began to preach to all the little feathered creatures who were gathered on the ground. Soon all those in the trees flew down to hear his words. Their twittering and chirping and fluttering

ceased, and all was quiet until St. Francis had finished his sermon. Even then, the little birds would not leave until they had had the saint's blessing. Above is Giotto's lovely fresco of this touching scene. The coloring is still beautiful, although the painting is ravaged by time; there is brown for the humble habits of St. Francis and his companion, brown for the tree trunks, white for the blossoms on the trees, and pale blue for the hillside against a pearly sky.

Painted on! Surely he must have known who painted it—there was only one Giotto who would ever look at a fly long enough to paint one that would deceive his master. Of course the story may not be true, but that does not make any difference. The important thing is that Giotto was the kind of painter about whom the story would be made up—and that he inspired many another painter of that kind.

### The Early Work of Giotto

The first work we have from Giotto is the story of St. Francis that he painted in the church at Assisi. At the very start he is painting the things he loves and is using real people for his models. We can see that he felt for St. Francis as for a dear friend.

Then he went to Rome and saw the splendid things that had come down from ancient days. Like Niccola Pisano he was impressed by the solid Roman figures, and he worked hard and long till he could make others like them with his brush and paint—till he could paint people who seemed to stand with some weight on their feet and not just to hang in mid-air, till he could make them look as if they had flesh and bones beneath their clothes.

Later he went to Padua (păd'ŭ-ă), to paint all four walls of the chapel called St. Mary of the Arena—because it stands where an old arena had stood in Roman days. In rows of many little pictures Giotto here painted the story of the Virgin and the Saviour. Here in beautiful soft colors he



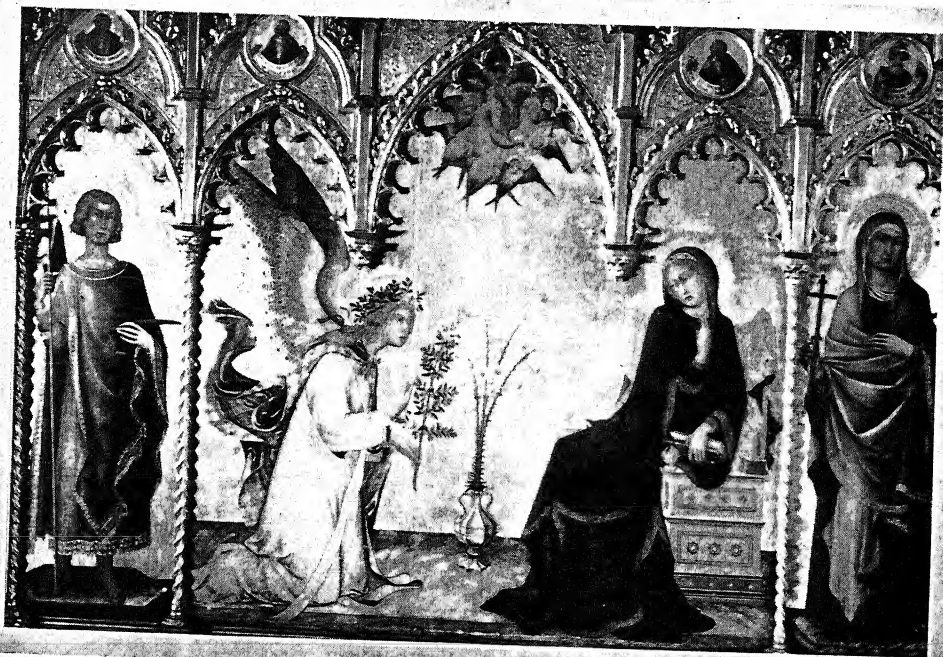
## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Alinari

Duccio did not try to make his people look real, as Giotto had; he wove them into a lovely pattern and gave them rapt faces that reflect his own deeply religious feeling. The three Marys of the picture above

have come to the tomb on Easter morning, and are struck with awe by the holy presence of the angel who sits on the tomb. Unreal as the figures are in themselves, their emotion is very vivid.



Simone Martini's paintings are like exquisite jewels. They glow with gold, and their sharp, delicate details are of the sort that come from a jeweler's hand.

Above is Simone's "Annunciation," with its lovely frame of lacy, Gothic arches. Like Duccio, the artist was fond of making patterns of shapes and colors.



## THE HISTORY OF ART

showed "splendid people gravely occupied with solemn acts." And ever since those pictures, every painter has had to solve a problem that never troubled any Byzantine artist at all.

It is this problem: how shall a flat picture on a flat surface be made to look, not flat at all, but solid and round—how shall a man's arm or head or chest be made to look as if it were some distance *through* as well as some distance across? The flat figure on the wall really has only length and breadth; how do you make it look as if it has thickness too?

Just take pencil and paper and see if you can do that. It took the greatest artists in the world nearly a thousand years to learn how to do it.

Now forget all you know about pictures except those that Giotto could have seen—Byzantine paintings and Gothic miniatures—and then look at his painting of Judas agreeing to betray Christ. The figures are solid and deep; they take up space, and are not just flat shadows on the wall. And ever since that picture was painted, people have nearly always demanded that the figures in a picture should look as round and solid as they do in life. But Giotto did it all so simply that at first you may not even notice what a great thing he has done.

He was thus a superb craftsman. When the Pope was making ready to decorate St. Peter's in Rome, he sent out a messenger to get samples of their work from all the best painters of the day. The messenger came to Giotto, and Giotto merely took a red pencil and drew a perfect circle with one turn of his hand.

"Is this all I am to have?" inquired the puzzled messenger.

"It is enough," answered the painter. "Put it with the others and see if it is not recognized."

It was recognized. The Pope knew something about art, and he was sure that he needed the hand that drew that perfect circle.

This skill in craft was half of Giotto's genius. The other half lies in what he chooses to put into his pictures. Never is there anything in one of them

that does not belong to the picture as a whole, never a line that does not have a meaning in itself and for the entire work. All the things go together to make the picture say just what it ought to say.

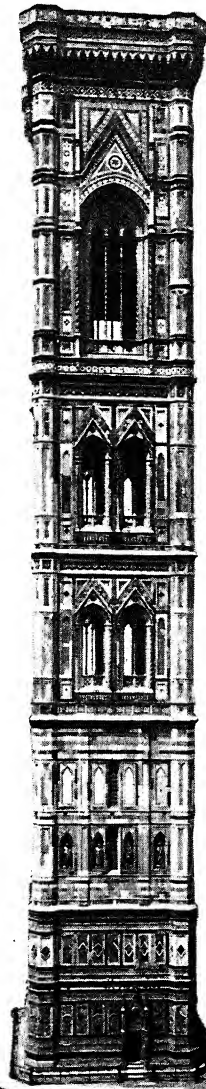
Take the picture of St. Joachim (jō'a-kim) returning to his sheepfold. Even if you do not know the story you can understand the picture. The saint is very sad. His head is bowed, his whole frame is heavy with grief. You can see that he can hardly drag one foot after the other. He does not even notice the little dog running to meet him. The shepherds, troubled and embarrassed, know not what to do. They want to help, but such deep sorrow has struck them dumb. They look at one another in their hesitation, while the sheep wander away unnoticed.

Or take the picture of Joachim and Anna meeting at the gate. How glad they are to see each other! The old man draws his wife to him, and she puts her hand against his cheek to press his face close to hers. Their friends come smiling through the gate to greet them.

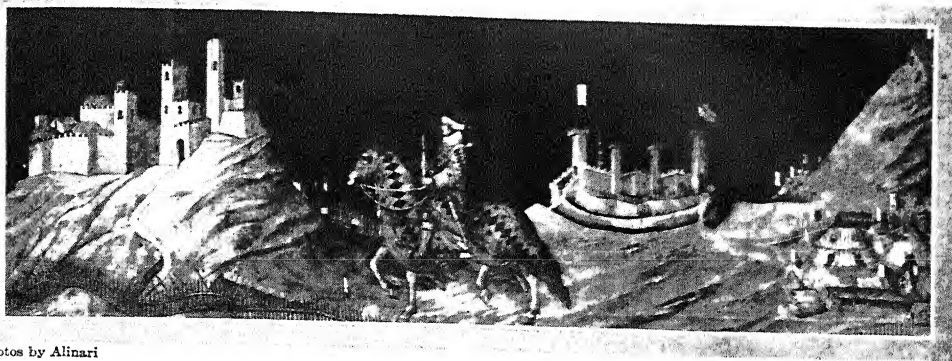
Or look at the barren landscape with a single dead tree on a rock where the people are lamenting the dead Christ. Every line here speaks of grief. Even the backs of the sitting women are huddled in sorrow. And look at their hands—Giotto's people never

This is the famous campanile, or bell tower, of the cathedral in Florence. Giotto made the original design, but he never lived to see his beautiful tower finished, and the plans had to be carried out by two other artists. But even though it is not all his work, the tower stands as a fitting memorial to the genius of Giotto.

Photo by Alinari



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Photos by Alinari

Simone Martini's *Guidoriccio* is like a prince from a fairy tale. He wears a gay tunic embroidered with a diamond pattern, and his horse is magnificently ca-

parisoned to match. The toy landscape with its saucy turrets makes the victorious general of Foligno look very grand and striking in contrast.

have aimless hands. Everything about these figures tells us what is in their hearts, and carries it to our hearts.

In his own time everyone loved Giotto's work. He was called from Padua to Rome again, and then to Naples and all over Italy. He had many friends. The great poet Dante, in exile from Florence, spent many an hour with him in Padua.

Wherever Giotto went he carried a gay tongue. There is a story that the King of Naples came into his studio one very hot day and said, "If I were you, I should stop painting for a while and take a rest."

"And so should I," Giotto replied, "if I were you."

But it was in Florence that the great painter was loved and honored most of all. He painted pictures in many churches and other buildings there, and finally, when he was sixty, he was put in charge of all the work on the cathedral of the city—for he could be an architect and sculptor when he chose. He designed the beautiful tower that we still know as "Giotto's tower," and even did some of the carving on it with his own hand. But he died before the work was finished, at the age of seventy, in 1337.

We may say farewell to him as he said farewell to St. Francis in one of the pictures at Assisi. It is a very quiet picture. There are silent figures standing by a silent figure lying on the bed. But it is peaceful and beautiful. We are lonely but not sad, because the one who has gone has left so much of himself behind.

About the same time when Giotto was painting all over Italy, there were other artists doing great work in the city of Siena, where we may go and see their works to-day. Siena is a city on a hill, or rather on several hills. The streets dive abruptly into a deep gulf and then climb up the other side to the cathedral. To see it all at its best you go into the church of San Domenico just as night is falling. Around behind the altar you pass through a little door, and then for a moment you feel as if you were going to topple into the chasm below. The church stands right on the edge of a hill and you are hanging in a little balcony on the brink of nothing.

### The Beautiful City of Siena

But now you look across to see the city piled up against the blue-green sky, for all the world like the backdrop on a stage. The little lights are beginning to beam out from the windows, but you can still see the towers. The buildings start at the very base of the hill and climb up steeply one above another to the top. You might think they sat on top of one another if you did not know there must be streets in among them.

At the top are the dome and tower of the cathedral, and yet another tower, still lovelier, that rises from the main square of the town. The whole place seems unreal—like a fairy city built up into the sky. It looks small and exquisite, and not very solid.

Now the paintings in Siena are like that,

too. The artists here clung to the old Byzantine ways. The city was rather remote from the rest of the world, and kept to old tradition. It was a gay place, and its fine old families wanted rich and lovely works of art. But they were not curious like the Florentines about the new ways of making pictures look so real. They were satisfied to have them beautiful.

#### The Great Altarpiece of Duccio

In the year 1309 Duccio di Buoninsegna (dōōt'chō dē bwō'nēn-sā'nyā) agreed to paint a great altarpiece for the cathedral wholly with his own hand. It was to be a picture of the Virgin in majesty surrounded by saints. In 1311 it was finished, and was carried in solemn procession to the cathedral, the marchers parading about the grounds while all the bells rang out their praise of the great picture.

Duccio painted the Mother and Child with a great court of saints around them. They are very graceful—especially the friendly angels that look over the top of the throne with their chins on their hands. The haloes make a pattern like a bank of flowers around the Virgin. And the back of the picture was painted, too—with a series of small pictures telling a story, much like Giotto's in the Arena chapel. But Duccio cared less than Giotto about making his story look real. His interest was in line and color.

One of the most beautiful of these pictures is that of the three Marys coming to the tomb on Easter morning. The top of the tomb, on which the angel sits, would never really balance in the way that Duccio placed it, but that does not seem to trouble you. Instead, you are noticing how he has made the dark background of the hill show up the white figure of the angel, and has put the light behind the three Marys in their dark cloaks. There is very little action in the picture, and it does not move like one by Giotto, but it has a lovely pattern that reminds you of a beautiful mosaic.

Another painter of lovely patterns was Simone Martini (sē-mō'nā mār-tē'nē). Three years after Duccio's painting of the Virgin in the cathedral, Simone painted a fresco of

the same subject for the town hall; it is even lovelier and more elaborate than Duccio's. The Virgin sits on a high, pointed throne under a canopy, and the picture is like a great banner with a border all around it.

On the other side of the same room rides the great Guidoriccio (gwē'dō-rēt'chō) of Foligno (fō-lēn'yō), an immense rider on an immense horse; they stand out majestically against a background of hills and castles so tiny that they look like a toy landscape. The proud captain looks as if he were riding to war in a fairy tale.

Duccio and Simone Martini were the pride of Siena, but some of the artists in Florence preferred Ambrogio Lorenzetti (ām-brō'jō lō'rēn-dsēt'tē)—perhaps because Ambrogio was more interested in real things, as were the Florentines. There were two of the Lorenzettis, Pietro (pyā'trō), the elder, and his brother Ambrogio; both of them lived in Siena.

#### The Frescoes of Good and Bad Government

In that same town hall of Siena, Ambrogio made his great frescoes of Good and Bad Government. In the fresco of Good Government we may see a picture of Siena as it stood in 1319, with the houses and towers crowding together, but each one very lovely with its dainty windows and battlemented roofs. They stand up in very solid fashion, and make a fascinating picture. In the other fresco you look out from the city over hills along a white road winding away through the gracious countryside. Perhaps that countryside had something to do with the grace of Sienese painting.

Such a figure as the one called "Peace," so full of dignity and so graceful in its ease, is very different from the work of Duccio and Simone. It is more like the work of Siena's great sculptor, Jacopo della Quercia (jā-kō' pō dē'lā kwēr'chā), whom we shall meet in Florence in another story, for he was not at all Sienese in spirit. He was a lonely figure, like Niccola Pisano, whom he greatly admired. It was he who made Siena's famous "Fonte Gaia" (fōn'tā gā'yā), or "Joyous Fountain," which brought cool water into a hot square.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit .

### No. 11

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## THE ARTISTS WHO MADE FLORENCE BEAUTIFUL

*Note: For basic information  
not found on this page, consult  
the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts,  
consult the Richards Year Book  
Index.*

### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| How Florence benefited from her many young artists, 11-124      | revealed the secrets of perspective, 11-132               |
| How three sculptors competed for the baptistery doors, 11-125   | How Lorenzo de Medici patronized the arts, 11-143         |
| Why Donatello mastered anatomy, 11-129                          | When Botticelli mastered the beauty of his dreams, 11-146 |
| Luca della Robbia's invention of colored glazes on clay, 11-130 | How a crazed monk condemned the gay life, 11-147          |
| Masaccio, the young man who                                     |   |

### *Things to Think About*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| From what earlier arts did the young artists of Florence draw their feeling for perfection? | What had the life of the city of Florence to do with the style of its art? |
| What new studies in the principles of art were made?  | How had religious feeling changed since the Gothic period?                 |

### *Picture Hunt*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| How has Ghiberti obtained a realistic effect in his carved panels? 11-127 | work? 11-131  |
| How did Donatello's statues differ from earlier ones? 11-129              | What can you find wrong with Gozzoli's "Wise Men"? 11-135       |
| In what new material did della Robbia do some of his best                 | Why does Botticelli's painting sometimes resemble music? 11-145 |

### *Related Material*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| The Medici family, rulers of Florence, 6-301-2 | Renaissance, 13-59-62                         |
| The law of perspective, 1-114                  | History of the Renaissance in Florence, 13-60 |
| Donatello's work in gold, 12-88                | Life and teachings of Savonarola, 13-537-39   |
| The architects of the Renaissance, 11-481-93   | Printing helped the Renaissance, 10-48        |
| Dante and Petrarch, poets of the               |   |

### *Summary Statement*

The Renaissance in Italy art as we know it to-day.  
marked the beginning of modern

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



## THE HISTORY OF ART

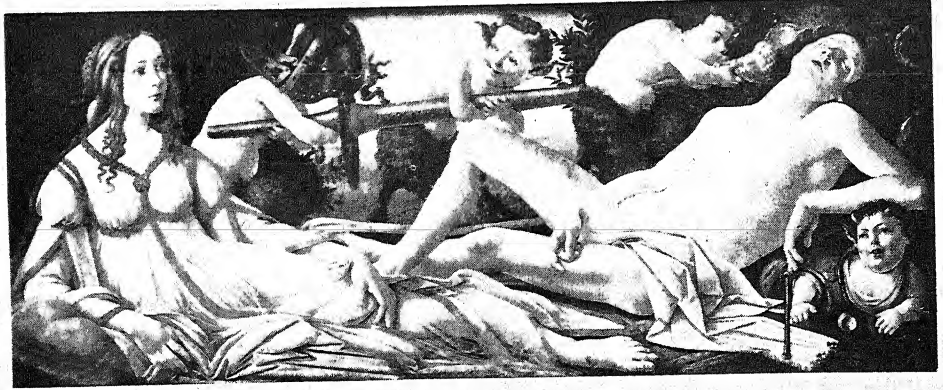


Photo by Alinari

On this page are paintings by one of the best-loved artists of all time, Sandro Botticelli. Above is his "Mars and Venus," a picture full of exquisite fancy. Lulled to sleep by Venus' magic charms, the god of

war has forgotten his cruel pastimes. Impish little fauns, taking advantage of his slumber, are playing with his weapons. One of them is quite extinguished by the god's great helmet.



Photo by Alinari

This is Botticelli's Adoration of the Magi. In a picturesque setting of an old ruin patched with a rustic wooden roof sit the Virgin and Child, while the Medici family kneels before them in adoration. Old Cosimo

kisses the infant's foot, and Piero and his sons kneel to the right. In the right-hand corner, standing and looking out at you, is Botticelli. The artist by no means flattered himself.

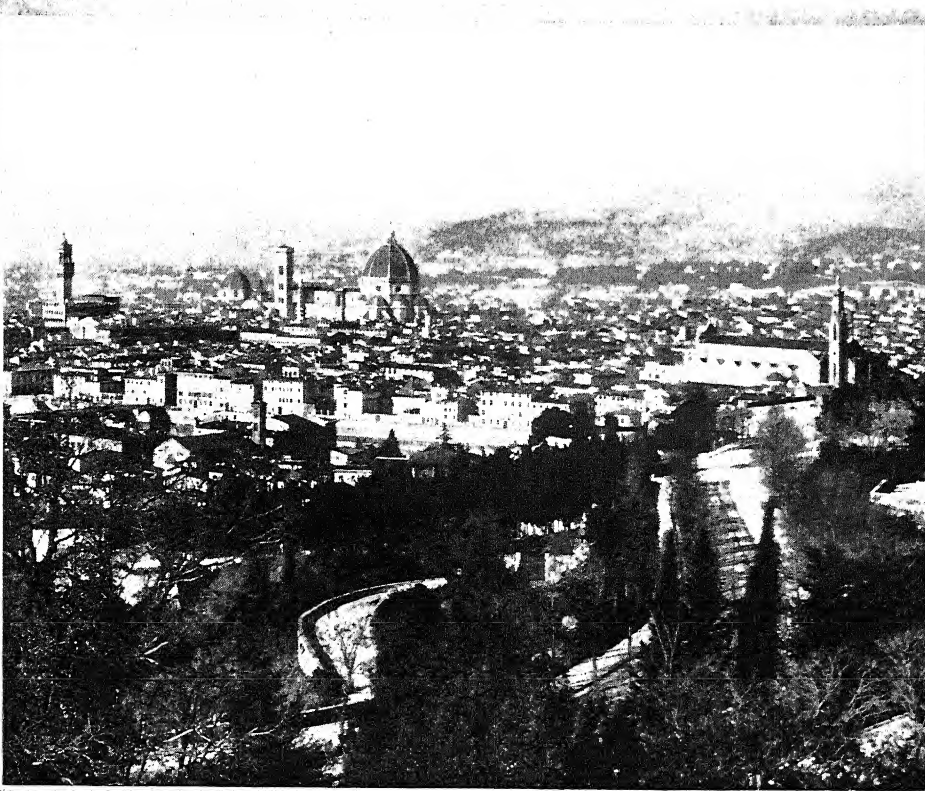


Photo by Alinari

If you were to climb the winding road that leads up the hill from low-lying Florence to the church of San Miniato al Monte, you would see this view of the glorious city. To the right is Santa Croce with its tall spire. It is a treasure house of famous works of art. In the center is the cathedral with its beautiful dome by Brunelleschi. Giotto's tower stands just

beside it; and in front of it—barely visible—is the baptistery, or church of Bel San Giovanni, about whose famous doors you may read in this chapter. To the left is the Old Palace, from whose battlemented walls the Florentines looked down to see the great reformer Savonarola burned. All of these celebrated buildings were begun before 1400.

## ***The ARTISTS WHO MADE FLORENCE BEAUTIFUL***

***Here Is the Story of the Great Painters and Sculptors Who Made Their City a Shrine for Travelers for Many a Century***

**T**HIS is a story of a glorious city in its most glorious days. The city is the beautiful one of Florence, in Italy, and the days are those of the fourteenth century, when Florence was more like a modern Athens than was any other place in the world.

She was illustrious in many ways at that time, but above all in the glory of her arts.

And this is the tale of the fine arts in Florence, of the arts that have left her one of the chief places for the traveler to visit to our day.

We have been to Florence before in our stories of the fine arts. On a former page we told how the great Giotto (jôt'tō) had a part in beginning to make the town a place of beauty. Now we come to the host of

artists who carried on the work in the century that followed him.

There is not very much left now of the Florence that Giotto knew. As you stand on a hillside looking down into the city, almost every tower and dome you see was built between 1300 and 1600. But there is a landmark of Giotto's boyhood that any child of old Florence was sure to enter at least once—the church of Bel San Giovanni (bēl sän jō-vän'nē), or Fair St. John, where every baby was taken for baptism. It is a very plain old eight-sided building, glowing with mosaics, and in the center stands the font where so many of the men in the following story got their names.

The square outside the church was a great gathering place in those days, with the stone benches built against the church walls. There the poet Dante sat and watched the work on the new cathedral. There, twenty-five years later, sat the aged Giotto to watch the building of his great tower. And there, about sixty years later still, sat the eager young artists who were wondering which of them might be chosen to make a pair of doors for Bel San Giovanni.

#### The Church of Or San Michele

Then there is another old landmark—a square building that was once a market and grew into a church to house a miracle-working picture of the Virgin. The church is called Or San Michele (ōr sän mē-kā'lā). The niches in its walls were bare in Giotto's

time, but were later filled up with the work of these eager young artists of the Renaissance.

Giotto spent most of his old age in Florence, dying when his beautiful tower was only half completed. So great had been his genius and his energy that for a time the

art of the city seemed almost lost without him. The painters and sculptors could go on imitating Giotto, but they could not do very much that was new. Andrea Pisano (än-drä'a pē-zä'nō) made a fine pair of carved bronze doors for the baptistry of San Giovanni, and another artist made a shrine for the Virgin of Or San Michele. But there was still the front of the cathedral to finish, and Giotto's tower, and many other things—who was to do them all? For sixty-five years the other



Photo by Alinari

Jacopo della Quercia made this relief that tells the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. His figures are full of strength and vigor, and remind us a little of the work of old Niccola of Pisa, about whom we have told in an earlier chapter.

two doorways of San Giovanni went undone. For a time it looked almost as if Florence had forgotten about her great aim of growing beautiful.

And then came the new century of the 1400's, with all sorts of new artists and new ideas—almost too many of them. Hardly in any other place or time has there been such a host.

When you read the names of all the artists who were at work between 1400 and 1500, you can almost think that everybody must have been an artist in those days. The various Italian cities are full of them—Florence, Mantua, Venice, and others—while up in the northern land of Flanders



## THE HISTORY OF ART

there is rising another great new school of painting. It seems likely that the founder of that school, Hubert van Eyck (vān ik'), had been down over the Alps and looked with clear eyes at the things of beauty to be seen in Italy. It is also likely that some Italian painter, either in Flanders or at home, studied the clever Flemish way of covering the colors of a picture with varnishes of oil that would shut out the air and keep the painting fresh all the way down to our day.

The century is so rich in art that we hardly know where to begin our story. Perhaps the best way will be to look at the work of certain groups of friends, and thus slowly build up our idea of the whole century. The story will take us to many spots in Europe, but we must begin in Florence, where most was happening.

In the year 1401 the merchants of that city decided that they must go on with the work of making it a place of beauty. They held a competition for the second pair of doors for the baptistery. Perhaps that was because there was no one artist famous enough to have a clear title to the commission. At any rate, the men who were asked to compete were all very young, and little known as yet.

The artists were invited from several cities. There was Jacopo della Quercia (jā-

kō'pō dēl'lä kwēr'chü)—one of the oldest, for he was twenty-six—from the gentle city of Siena (syē'nä). But he was anything except gentle in his art, for his carvings were full of vigor and his figures strong and solid. The great Michelangelo (mī'kēl-ān'gē-lō) admired his work, and saw in it some of

the mighty strength of his own. Jacopo was one of the few men in his day who remembered the carvings of old Niccola of Pisa.

Then there was a young man, only twenty-four, named Filippo Brunelleschi (brōō'-nēl-lēs'kē). He was known as a sculptor and goldsmith. And there was Lorenzo Ghiberti (gē-bēr'-tē), another goldsmith.

It was between these two that the judges hesitated longest. They liked Jacopo's work, but they thought that the designs of the two young Florentines were more elegant.

Brunelleschi had made a carving full of vigor and action. It was a picture of the sacrifice of Isaac. With his hand on the boy's throat, Abraham is just ready to strike when the angel from heaven rushes down to stay the blow. Full of his idea, Brunelleschi had worked very rapidly on his fine piece of work; but it is said that when he saw what Ghiberti had done, he generously wanted to withdraw in Ghiberti's favor, so much better did Ghiberti's work appear.



Photo by Alinari

Brunelleschi's Abraham and Isaac stand out more strongly from their background than did Jacopo's. The relief is full of action. With his hand on the boy's throat, Abraham is about to strike when an angel rushes down from heaven to stay his hand.





Photo by Alinari

This beautiful sarcophagus is thought by many to be the work of Jacopo della Quercia. The lovely figure so peacefully sleeping is Hilaria del Carretto. A double pillow supports her head, and at her feet is a dog;

he stands for fidelity. About the tomb are chubby little cherubs—very much like pagan cupids except that they are very sad and thoughtful. Their garlands seem almost too heavy for them to carry.

Ghiberti had worked very slowly, and from many sketches. Alone among the artists he had invited everyone into his studio to watch the work and to help him with suggestions. His work in bronze was the wonder of every visitor, and the judges finally decided in his favor.

This competition was important in a good many ways. For just one thing, one of the judges was a certain Giovanni de' Medici (dā mēd'ē-chē), a rich merchant who was one of the first of the great family of the Medici that did so much for Florence and the rest of the world in the century to come.

After the competition Jacopo della Quercia went to the city of Lucca to carve a tomb for the beautiful Hilaria, wife of the ruler of that city. She had died when her little son was born; and Jacopo carved on her tomb a wreath of little angels—fat little angels made like the old Roman cupids—carrying garlands all around the sides of the tomb, while the figure of Hilaria, young and beautiful, sleeps on the top.

Later Jacopo went back to Siena, where he made so beautiful a fountain that he was known as "Jacopo of the Fountain."

Brunelleschi was discouraged as a sculptor

when he lost in the competition. Looking for an art in which he might excel all rivals, he went down to Rome for study and became a famous architect. He came back to build the tall and beautiful dome of the cathedral of Florence.

With him to Rome he took a lad of fifteen named Donatello (dōn'ā-tēl'ō), who had already been helping in the building of the cathedral, and who was to be famous in due time. The only other piece of sculpture that we have from Brunelleschi came into being on account of a taunt from Donatello. The boy had made a carving of Christ on the cross, and brought it for his friend to see.

"You have put a peasant on the cross," said Brunelleschi.

#### The Crucifix of Brunelleschi

Donatello was a quick-tempered fellow. "Let me see you take a piece of wood and do any better," he replied.

Brunelleschi held his tongue, but he went off and set to work. A few months later he showed Donatello what he had made—a crucifix so beautiful that on looking at it Donatello dropped a whole apronful of eggs he was carrying.

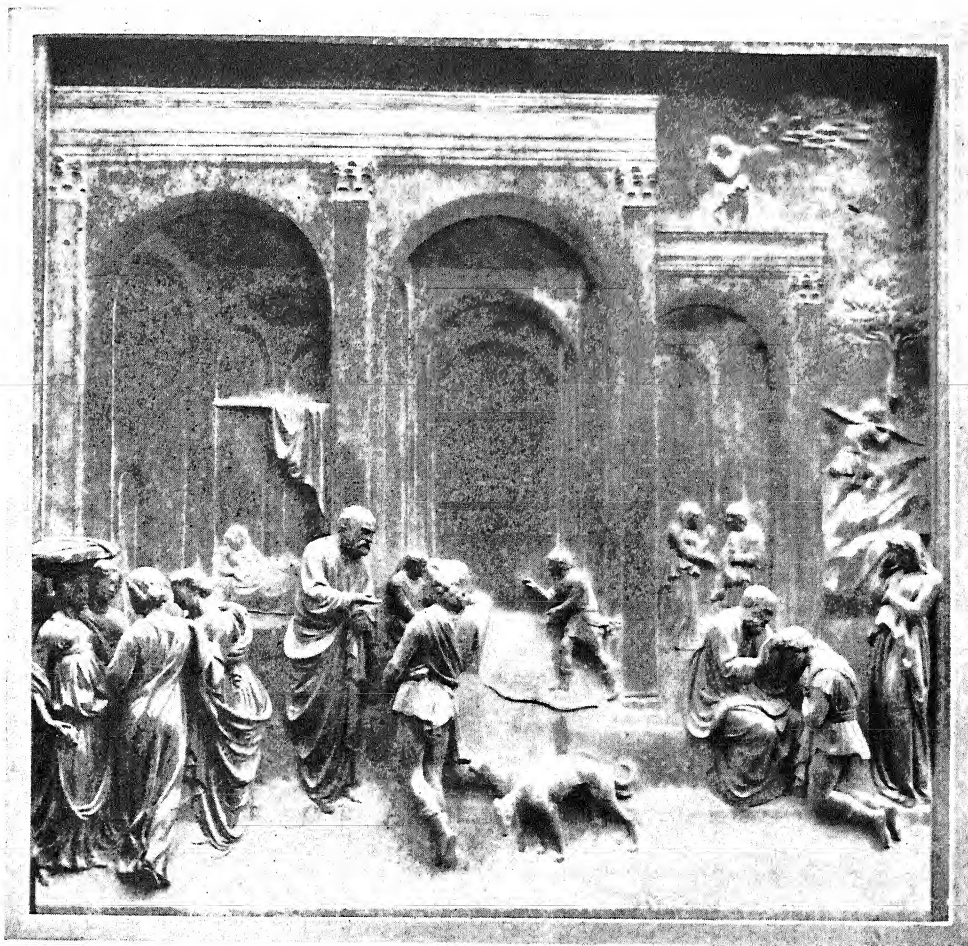


Photo by Alinari

This is a panel from the "Gates of Paradise," the beautiful doors Ghiberti made for the eastern entrance to the baptistery in Florence. Here we see the story of Jacob and Esau clearly and simply told. The

figures, so beautifully grouped, are clear and simple, too—we scarcely realize the great genius it took to make them so. Tall arches and a hint of a landscape lead us back into the distance.

"And what are we going to have for lunch now?" asked Brunelleschi, laughing.

"It is lunch enough to look at a piece of work like that," concluded his friend.

These two men went to look at every monument of art in Rome and the surrounding country. They were smilingly called the "treasure seekers" because they were always prowling around among the Roman ruins. And they really brought back treasures in their new ideas about sculpture. More deeply than anyone before them did they fall in love with Greek and Roman forms, till it seemed to them that no other art on earth could rival the art of old.

Brunelleschi once walked sixty miles to see and copy a Greek vase.

Ghiberti was also a great collector of antiques. But the remarkable thing about all these men was that when they came to do their own work they never copied—they had too many of their own new ideas for that.

On their return from Rome the treasure seekers found that Giovanni de' Medici had come to be the great man of Florence. The Medici family were eager to make their city beautiful as well as rich, and Giovanni and his son Cosimo (kō'zê-mō) had many friends among the artists. The young Donatello was a close friend of Cosimo, and for the

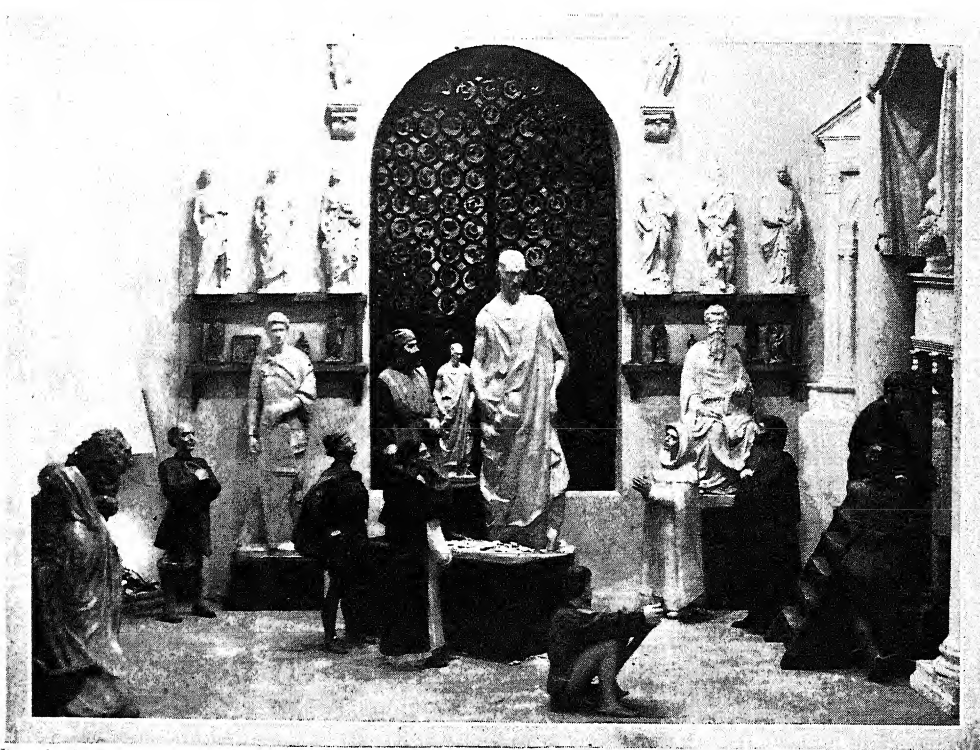


Photo by the Art Institute of Chicago

This is a modern artist's idea of how Donatello's studio may have looked. Here we see the great Florentine sculptor's masterpieces; in the center is

the famous "Pumpkin Head," to the left is St. George. The darker figures are the artist, his students, and visitors come to see his works.

courtyard of Cosimo's fine new palace he made his famous statue of David.

By this time Ghiberti was working on the third pair of doors for the baptistery—the ones that Michelangelo said were "worthy to adorn the gates of Paradise." It is truly wonderful how these solid doors of bronze have been turned into pictures that show such depth and distance. Around them is a border of fruits and birds and little animals that prove how fully the artist's eyes were open to the forms of all living things; and the edges are so crisp and delicate as to make one think the artist's hand has just put the last touch to his work.

#### A Visit to Or San Michele

About all these young men, and about the spirit of Florence in their day, we can learn a good deal from a visit to the church of Or San Michele. Inside it is so dim that we can hardly see. Candles are flickering before

the beautiful shrine that houses the strange, wide-eyed image of the miraculous Virgin. The shrine is covered with delicate carvings of angels in swirling robes; and on it there is also a beautiful pattern of wings. The darkness is heavy with incense, and we feel far away from the world.

#### The Living Art of Donatello

Outside are the four bare walls with their niches now filled by the fiery young artists of the new age. There is the St. John of Ghiberti, in its day a wonder because no one had made so large a statue in bronze for many a century. And there is young St. George, by Donatello, with a face so eager and so full of life that his eyes seem to burn. Standing firmly on his feet, he still seems quivering to be up and off for a heroic battle. Into such a figure Donatello must have put a great deal of himself, for of all these fiery young men of the new age, Donatello had



## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Alinari

Here are three of Donatello's most famous works. To the left is the "Pumpkin Head"; in the center, David; and to the right, the heroic and eager St. George. The statues of the Middle Ages had been made to

stand in niches; no one was supposed to see them from all sides. Donatello was the first since the old Romans to make statues that stood by themselves and were to be seen from any angle at all.

the most burning curiosity and eagerness. All of Florence is very much alive, on the verge of great new things in this great day.

A treasure seeker in the past, Donatello was a great artist in his imagination for the present and the future.

He marveled at the carvings of old Greece and Rome, but that is not enough to make an artist. And seeing that those old sculptors had grown great by taking nature for their model, Donatello also went to nature to learn all he could from her. Eager and inquisitive, he found out all about how the human body is put together. He knew he had to master all anatomy before he could make figures such as those from Greece and Rome.

This is Donatello's *Gattamelata*, a nickname which means "honeyed cat" and quite suits the sly face and piercing eyes of the tyrant-soldier.

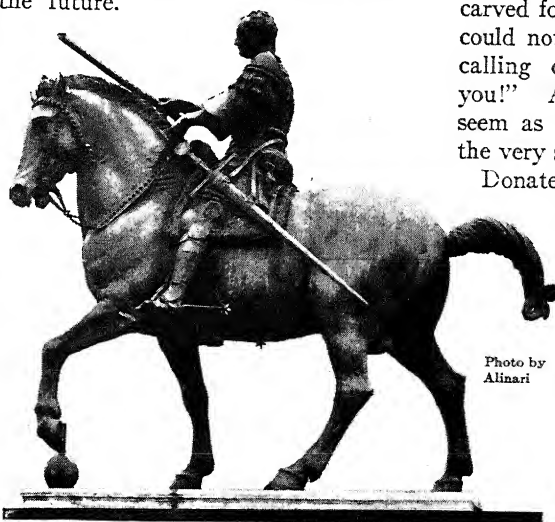


Photo by Alinari

His figures are so tensely alive that the stone hardly seems able to hold them. They are characters, such as he wanted them to be. We are told that his favorite statue was the "Pumpkin Head" that he carved for the cathedral. He could not pass it by without calling out, "Speak, can't you!" And indeed it does seem as if there were life in the very stone.

Donatello's figures are so human and so living that they are true to every age as well as to his own. He can picture anguish and despair in his pulpits in St. Lorenzo, gay and care-free childhood in his singing gallery, and classic calm

in his restrained and lovely "Annunciation." All these artists traveled about Italy, seeing many new things and bringing home





Photo by Alinari

The Annunciation above, by Donatello, is in the church of Santa Croce in Florence. The gracious figures of the Virgin and angel stand against a background of delicate carvings.



Photo by Alinari

This is one of the panels of Donatello's singing gallery. Here he has made a group of gay and spritely romping children. We can almost hear the merry music that set them dancing.

many new ideas. Donatello spent years in Padua. There he left his famous statue of Gattamelata (gät'tä-mâ-lä'tä) on horseback. It was the first horse to be done in bronze for many a century, and an enormous one for the small rider atop it. This rider's legs hang a little loosely, and you may wonder what sort of man he is until you look at his face. Then there is no question. That forehead and that jaw and those piercing eyes can be those of a soldier only, and those of a tyrant cold and relentless.

Such were the men who brought Florence into fame in those years. They all worked on the cathedral, and with them worked another friend, the famous Luca della Robbia (löö'-kä dël'lä rōb'byä). He made carvings for the doorways of the sacristy, as well as a singing gallery, or "cantoria," similar to Donatello's. The panel of the singing boys has seven figures in an easy and natural group, each

in his own way interested in the song. One has thrown back his head to let out his voice, while another is leaning forward to see the music. This is one of the rare things that Luca did in stone. For he found work in stone and bronze so slow and costly that he cast about for some other medium of production on a large scale.

What he invented is known as "della Robbia" to this day. He put colored glazes on his clay models, and then baked them to a hard, shiny surface that looks like china. In this way he could make many more things to sell. He and his family set up a large workshop, and spent a good deal of time in studying ways for coloring their glazes with soft blues and yellows.

Artists like these received handsome rewards under Cosimo de' Medici, the "father of his country," and under his successors. In their time it seemed as if Florence could not do enough for art and beauty, and as if



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

This charming figure of Prudence is the work of Luca della Robbia. It is in the glazed terracotta which Luca invented and which was to make the name of della Robbia so famous. His colors are mostly cool blues and delicate greens. Fruit is often made into a framing garland, and sprigs of flowers give a charming effect of spring.

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Luca della Robbia never married, but his nephew Andrea did, and had a large family. So Andrea had plenty of models for the lovely babies he made of glazed terracotta. His "bambino" (bām-bē'nō)—or baby—above was made for a children's hospital.



From the workshop of the della Robbias comes this scene of the Visitation. Luca's art was passed on from father to son for several generations, but none of the later della Robbia's ever made anything quite so stately and simple as Luca's beautiful work.



Photos by Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Alinari

Above is a Madonna and Child by Luca della Robbia. The figures are full of tenderness and dignity and yet are very human.



This is a detail from the singing gallery Luca della Robbia made—not of glazed terracotta, but of warm and shining marble.

the number and the skill of her artists were inexhaustible.

On his death, in 1464, Cosimo left his friend Donatello a fine farm to pay an income that would leave the artist free from care for the rest of his life. But before a

year was over, the old Donatello came to Cosimo's son Piero with a request.

"Take back your farm," he pleaded. "It is spoiling all my peace. The farmers come pestering me every day because the wind has blown off the roof or because the cattle have

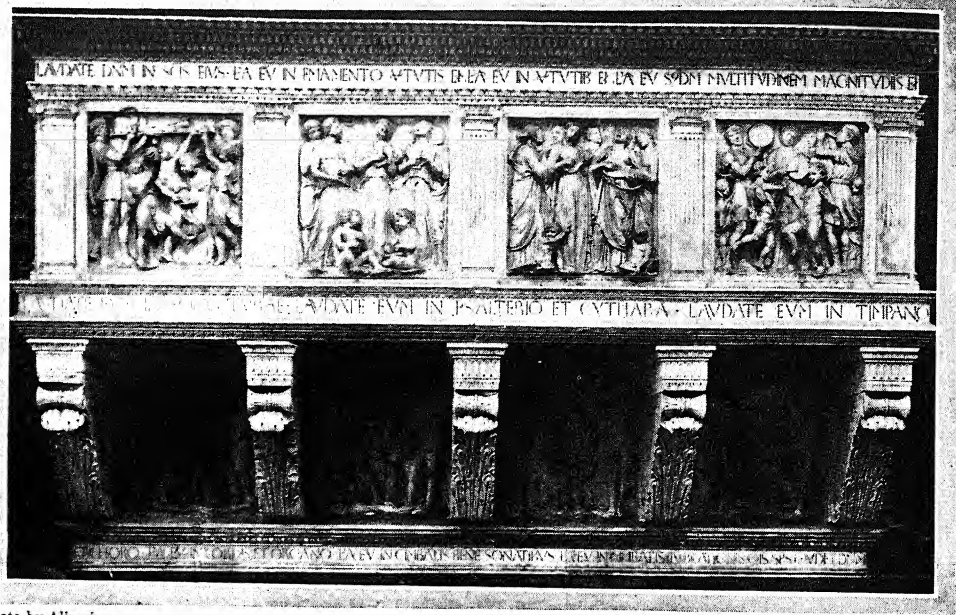


Photo by Allinari

Luca della Robbia's beautiful singing gallery illustrates a psalm. In its panels stately grown people and frolicking children are praising the Lord with

voice and dance, with trumpet, harp, and the "high sounding" cymbals. See how easily and naturally the many graceful figures are grouped.

been seized for taxes. I am all worn out, and I would rather die of hunger than live under so many cares."

Piero laughed, and then gave the artist an income without a troublesome farm.

### The Importance of Perspective

But who were the painters in these great days of Florence? So far, we have been naming sculptors and architects, since these were more important in the beginning. There were painters too, however, and especially a frowzy boy in whom Brunelleschi took so much interest as to show him the remarkable charts he had worked out in his study of perspective.

This matter of perspective (*pēr-spēk'tiv*) is so important that we must say a word about it. Suppose you are drawing a picture with a baby in the front, a man a little farther away, a tree in the middle distance, and a mountain in the background. The baby, being nearest, may look larger than the man—that is how a camera might show him—and the man might look taller than the tree or the mountain. In many an old

picture, indeed, that is just how things do look, with the people much bigger than the houses they live in and the houses bigger than the mountains a mile away. Now the man may really take up more space in the picture, than the mountains; so how do you make him *look* smaller, and make all the other things look their proper size? Or to put the whole thing another way, all the figures in your painting are really at an equal distance from the eye, for they are all on a flat wall; how are you going to make the man look ten feet away, the house ten yards, and the mountain ten miles?

### The Man Who Started Modern Painting

To do that you have to know all about perspective. It is a difficult art, all governed by mathematics, and it took the painters many a century to master it. We are now coming to the man who showed them the secrets of it.

The boy whom Brunelleschi befriended had a very long name, but his friends shortened it to Masaccio (*mā-sāt'chō*), which really means "sloppy Tom," because he



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Photo by Alinari

Masaccio began where Giotto had left off. These two great Florentines are each responsible for something new in art. Giotto had made his figures solid and real. Masaccio did that too, but he went still further; he mastered the science of perspective. His figures spread out, one behind another, far back into the

picture. If we could be transported into the fresco above, Masaccio's "Tribute Money," we could walk around and among the group of people, for there is plenty of space left in between them. But how puny we should look beside these noble figures who have more than human power and strength!



Photo by Alinari

We need not stand in awe before a painting by Fra Angelico. We may enjoy it for what it is, the outpouring of an earnest and devoted soul. Fra Angelico's paintings are happy dreams. His paradise is a fairyland carpeted with velvety moss and bright little

flowers, his angels are serene and happy children, and over all is the freshness of spring and the glow of warm color and gold. There is no great tragedy in his painting above. The scene is ecstatic and tenderly sad, and far removed from the world we live in.



never cared about his looks. He was too busy painting. And even though he died at twenty-seven, he had done something for painting that no one has undone since.

By mastering perspective, Masaccio made his figures in deep space loom up and look real. No longer did they seem all to be standing on a flat wall; but the wall disappeared and the figures in the background were far away behind it. That is why the people in his day said that other artists had painted figures, while Masaccio was making living men and women.

He did not live long enough to paint very much. His great work is all in one chapel, in stories from the Bible. He could place the figures to tell his story very clearly, and we can read the gestures of his people as easily as those of our friends. In the "Tribute Money," for instance, the tax gatherer has come to collect money from Jesus and the apostles when they have none to give. As the collector holds out his hand, the apostles turn their troubled faces toward the Master, and Peter raises an angry hand to drive the man away. But Jesus tells Peter to go and cast his line in the water: in the mouth of the first fish he catches will be a coin to pay the tax. All this is as clear in the picture as our words can make it.

The rest of the story is told in the pictures at the sides—one of Peter drawing the money from the mouth of the fish, the other of the apostle handing it to the collector.

But how big and real the people look!

Yet they are not crowded—they have plenty of room to move about. They are not glued to the background, and are no mere outlines just filled in with color. Masaccio took paint on his brush and drew with it, blocking in the shadows and the lights as his eye caught them, and he created a living scene.

As in all such cases, these pictures do not seem so wonderful at first, because so many men have since learned the secret of them. But we must look at them the other way around. Before Masaccio no one had made pictures like these. It was he who worked out the secret of them, and ever since his time that secret has been open to any other painter. It is the secret of making things look real. That is what we mean if we say that he started "modern" painting.

When Masaccio died, in 1428, there were other painters in Florence who were less intent on making their pictures look real, and more eager to give them delicate outlines and lovely colors.

Cosimo de' Medici used to spend a good deal of time in prayer and meditation at the convent of San Marco. In this place there was an artist named Brother John who painted pictures for the convent walls. His pictures were made for monks who had their eyes on Heaven and who did not care much whether the works were like the real things in this world. And the pictures, in their lovely colors, look almost as if they had come down from Heaven. The picture of the Virgin being crowned in Heaven is bright



Photo by Bruckmann

This exquisite scene is the work of Fra Filippo Lippi, a painter who loved simple people and simple things. His Madonna is a little peasant maiden whose chubby baby is sucking his finger as babies have done from time immemorial. We have come a long way from Cimabue's and Duccio's other-worldly and mysterious Madonnas.



Photo by Alinari

Can you guess who are these richly dressed people riding in happy throng and winding in and about the rocky hillside? They are the Wise Men and their followers on their way to adore the infant Jesus. But probably you would not have guessed who they were,

for Benozzo Gozzoli, who painted the picture for the chapel of the Medici palace, had no notion of making the Wise Men as they may have been. Instead he gave us a pageant of mighty men of his own day, and his landscape he took from his own imagination.

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with gold, with the blues and pinks, greens and reds that remain wonderfully fresh and bright.

In his convent Brother John came to be known as Fra Angelico (frä än-jël'ê-kō) because these pictures were so angelic in their purity. That is what we call him to this day. He was not unaware of the new discoveries about perspective, and when he made his picture of Christ being taken down from the cross, he showed that he too could paint a landscape with the figures taking their proper places in it. Yet it is like a fairy-tale landscape by the side of Masaccio's.

In his lonely monastery Fra Angelico had only one pupil, Benozzo Gozzoli (bā-nōt'sō göt'sō-lē), who worked for the son of Cosimo. There was another monk working for Cosimo who was a very different sort of man from Fra Angelico. This was Fra Filippo Lippi (fê-lêp'pō lêp'pē). Born

about 1400, he was of the same age as Masaccio, and he was put into a monastery because he had been left an orphan. But he did not want to be a monk, and he was constantly running away to wild adventures, until it was finally decided that there was no use in trying to make a monk of him.

Filippo Lippi was very fond of the plain people. In fact, he was the first Italian painter to care much about ordinary folk, and he put them into all his pictures. We may see this in the beautiful Nativity he

Painted for the chapel of Cosimo's palace. The Virgin, in a blue cloak, is kneeling before her child. The forest has closed in to form a dark grotto, where the sturdy John the Baptist is standing guard. The Virgin is just a simple peasant girl with a chubby baby sucking his finger, and thus very different from the older Madonnas on their stately thrones. But the picture is beautiful from the love we can read in it for simple people and simple things. Filippo has looked very closely at the flowers and the grasses that make up the bower of the Mother and Child; and he has made it dark night all around them so that their figures may stand out in the light.

Among all the painters of the time, it was Masaccio who taught the rest of Italy. Many a young artist set to copying his pictures; the very greatest men, Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo, spent some of their student days at it. Almost every artist we are going to mention worked over the per-



Photo by Alinari

This swaggering figure is Pippo Spano, a soldier of fortune. Andrea del Castagno has given him so much power and strength and roundness that we can scarcely believe that he is painted on a flat wall!



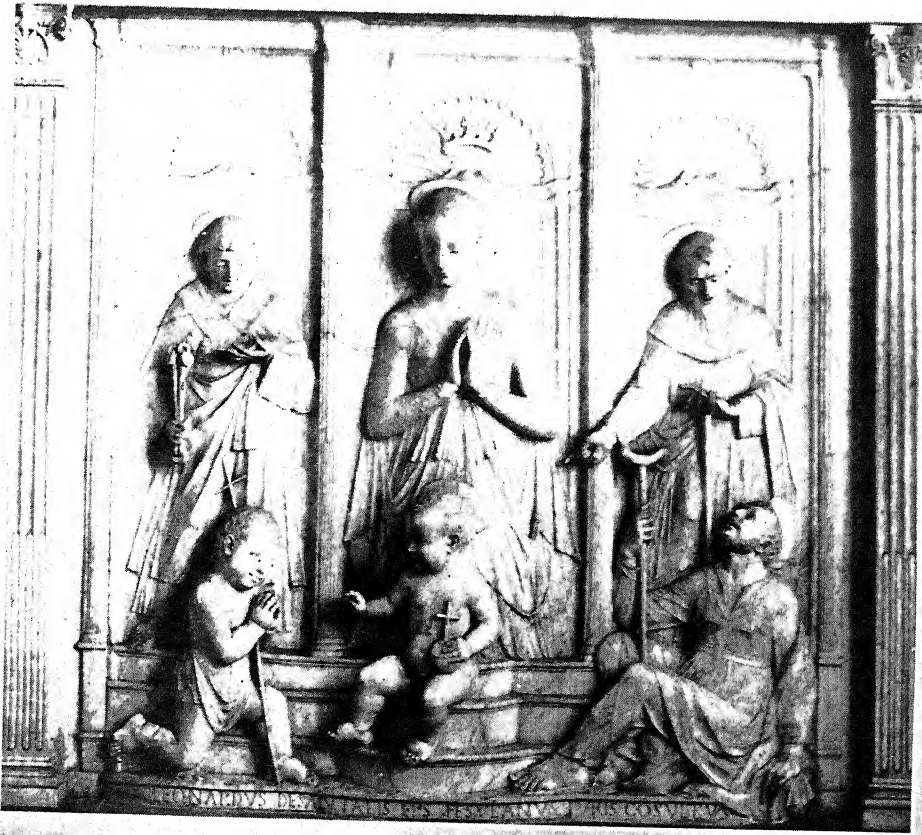


Photo by Alinari

This gentle scene of the Virgin and Child with various saints was carved by Mino da Fiesole, who could

shape stone into the most delicate features, into soft hair and into the sweetest of smiles.

spective and the figures in those pictures.

Paolo Uccello (pā'ō-lō ōōt-chēl'ō) went mad about the new perspective. Born a few years before Masaccio, he lived a long time after him. The people used to laugh at him for a lunatic when he shut himself up for weeks and months and tried to find out just how the sun casts shadows. Donatello used to come and argue with him, and his own wife would complain that he loved perspective more than he loved her. But all this study made the figures in his paintings look amazingly solid, and the shadows are certainly where they belong.

Andrea del Castagno (ān-drā'ā dēl kās-tān'yō) was another wizard at making solid bodies out of paint on a flat wall. His people look so real and so imperious that one

feels a little humbled in front of them. Such is his Pippo Spano (pēp'pō spā'nō), soldier of fortune, as he stands with his feet well apart and looks down as if to say that he could tell any man a thing or two about the way to rule a country. He was one of those men whom rulers hired in that age to fight their wars and put their affairs in order. Many a city called these men in at need, and many a portrait was made of them. Donatello's Gattamelata was another of them, and so was the famous Colleoni (kōl'lā-ō'nē), whom we shall meet in a moment.

After Cosimo de' Medici came his son Piero (pyē'rō), a wise and good man, though not a very strong one. He did not live to rule very long, and was by no means so energetic as his father. But it was he who



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made Benozzo Gozzoli paint the walls of the chapel in the Medici palace.

In that chapel Filippo Lippi painted the Madonna and Child to go above the altar. Then Gozzoli painted the walls with a procession of the Wise Men coming to adore the infant Jesus whom Lippi had painted in the altar picture. Gozzoli had no notion of painting these men as they may really have been. Instead, he gave us a pageant of wise and mighty men of his own day. There had just been a great church conference at Florence, with all sorts of famous visitors, and Gozzoli put some of these men into his procession. There is the Emperor of the East, John Palaeologus (pā'lē-ō-lō'gūs), clad in gorgeous raiment and riding on a white charger, and there is the Patriarch of Constantinople on a mule. The third

wise man is no other than young Lorenzo de' Medici, son of Piero, who was so soon to be the splendid ruler of Florence. Behind these come old Cosimo and Piero, and many other great men of the city.

They all ride gaily in their fine clothes over the castle-crowned hills and through the forests where huntsmen chase the flying deer. The pictures are full of holiday splendor, and are lovely in color. Gozzoli shows us Florence at her happiest.

Gay and gentle like him was the sculptor Mino da Fiesole (mē'nō dā fyē'zō-lā), who could shape stone into the most delicate features, into fine, soft hair and very sweet smiles. But by the side of these graceful artists there was a more strenuous man who was carrying on the work of Masaccio. This was Antonio Pollaiuolo (pōl'i-wō'-

lō), pupil of Ghiberti, sculptor, painter, glass designer, and engraver. A genius of great vigor, he worked at anatomy with the same frenzy as that of Paolo Uccello for perspective. He loved to put his figures into astounding poses, and his pictures are full of writhing and leaping forms.

At this point we may leave Florence for a moment to see what some of the other cities are doing. We shall come back again, for the story of Florence is not half told.

For ten years the city of Padua was the home of Donatello. There he made his famous statue of Gattamelata. And there a young boy named Andrea Mantegna (mān tān'yā) was so fascinated by the stern face of that statue that he made up his mind to be a strong and vigorous artist

like its maker. Mantegna also went to what was really the first true art school of the modern world in Padua, where a famous teacher put all his pupils to copying the carvings of the Greeks and Romans. And the boy kept drawing bits of the old marble statues and reliefs until he felt the very blood of old Rome running in his veins, until he seemed to live again in the grand days of old.

Though Mantegna turned out as a painter, not a sculptor, the figures in his paintings have the firm, strong look of sculpture about them. He never thought of a picture as a flat thing on a wall. Instead, he made it melt away into the deep distance or lean forward right out of its frame as if it were a figure in a window.

A famous man at thirty, Mantegna was called away to Mantua, to work for the Gonzaga (gōn-zā'gā) family,

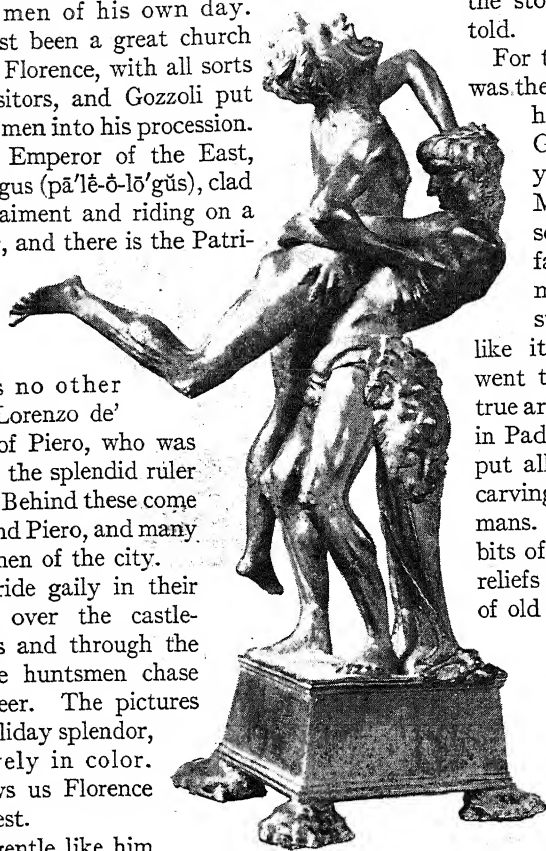


Photo by Alinari

That Antonio Pollaiuolo was a master of vigorous movement is easily seen in his "Hercules Strangling Antaeus," shown above. Antaeus, as you may remember, was a mighty giant, the son of Earth. His power was unlimited as long as he stayed in contact with his mother—that is, as long as he kept his feet on the ground! Hercules, who also was immensely strong, made no headway at all against the giant until he had the happy thought of lifting him into the air; then he was finally able to strangle Antaeus. Pollaiuolo has caught the mighty strength of both men. See how the muscles ripple along Hercules' calves, and how tightly he grips his struggling adversary!



Photo by Alinari

Gentile's procession of the Wise Men is perhaps the most entrancing procession art has ever made. The people with their rich costumes and spirited chargers have stepped right out of a fairy tale.

who were the Medici of that city. He had a square room to paint, in honor of the marriage of one of the Gonzagas. For that purpose he chose no religious story or classical legend; he painted the Gonzaga family themselves, sitting in conversation or making ready for the hunt.

In that room you may see that Mantegna has played a more elaborate trick than even the old Romans. He has wholly painted away the real walls of the room, and has turned it into a pavilion with arcades looking out over the countryside. Of course the arcades and countryside are



Photo by Alinari

Piero della Francesca's portrait of Frederigo, duke of Urbino, is a delightful pattern as well as a delightful portrait. The Duke wears a red cap and robe, and his strong and kindly face is silhouetted against a low-lying landscape and clear sky. Piero painted things as he saw them, and he has shown faithfully the Duke's crooked nose—the result of a sword cut.

merely painted on the walls; but it looks as if the whole thing were real, and as if you were standing in a crowd and looking out over the landscape with them. Then you look up and see a round opening in the ceiling with blue sky and clouds above. Around the railing of the opening are people looking down at you, and little cupids with them—and then you see that the opening is merely painted too, with the sky and clouds and all the people.

Mantegna also painted some of the most beautiful of all Madonnas. The Mother bends her

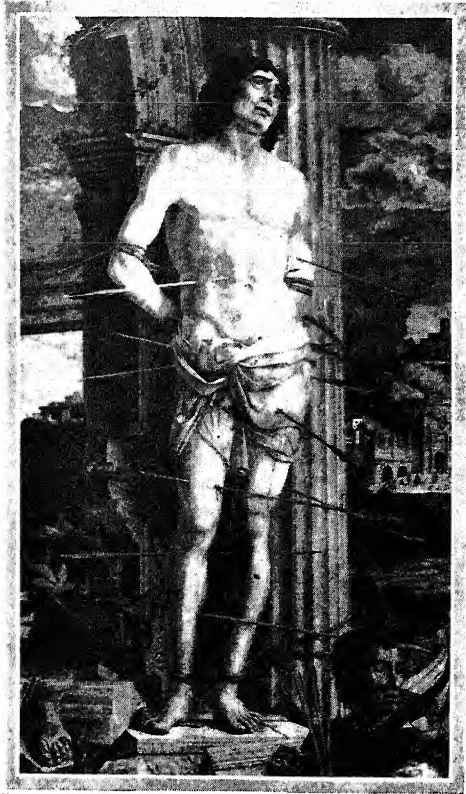


Photo by Alinari

These are two paintings by Mantegna, the artist who made his figures look more like sculptures than like paintings. Above is his St. Sebastian. The martyr stands against a Roman arch and column. In the distance are stormy clouds.

head very tenderly over the Child. And you feel that the painter must surely have had babies of his own, because he likes to paint them so newborn and sleepy, and even ugly—as a father loves them.

#### The Gentle Art of Gentile

Mantegna married the daughter of Jacopo Bellini (bĕl-lĕ'nĕ), one of the great painters of Venice. Her two brothers, also painters, greatly admired Mantegna, and he in turn learned something from their art. In his painting of the Death of the Virgin, for instance, he has an outdoor stillness and a quiet evening light that was one of the great contributions of Venice to the art of painting.

The district of Umbria is a gracious land. Lying in the center of Italy, it stretches over low and rolling hills. From the square before the church of St. Francis, in Assisi (ās-sĕ'zĕ),



Photo by Alinari

Mantegna's St. George stands as though he were a statue in a niche. But instead of a niche there is a landscape of hilly Italy. A long winding road takes us back into the distance to a hill that "wears its city as it would a crown."

you may look out over hills and valleys and more hills far off into the blue distance. The first great painter from this gentle country was the man whom Michelangelo called "gentle both by name and by nature."

For his name was Gentile (jĕn-tĕ'lā). Born about 1360, he lived just a little later than the great Flemish painter, Hubert van Eyck, who also loved the countryside as no artist had loved it before. Whether these two painters ever met we cannot say, but they are much alike in the loving way they painted landscape.

The greatest picture we have from Gentile is one of a procession of the Wise Men coming to worship the infant Christ. Crowded with figures and very bright in color, it is one of the happiest processions that ever came from the brush of a painter. At the bottom of it is another picture—a little one of the Na-



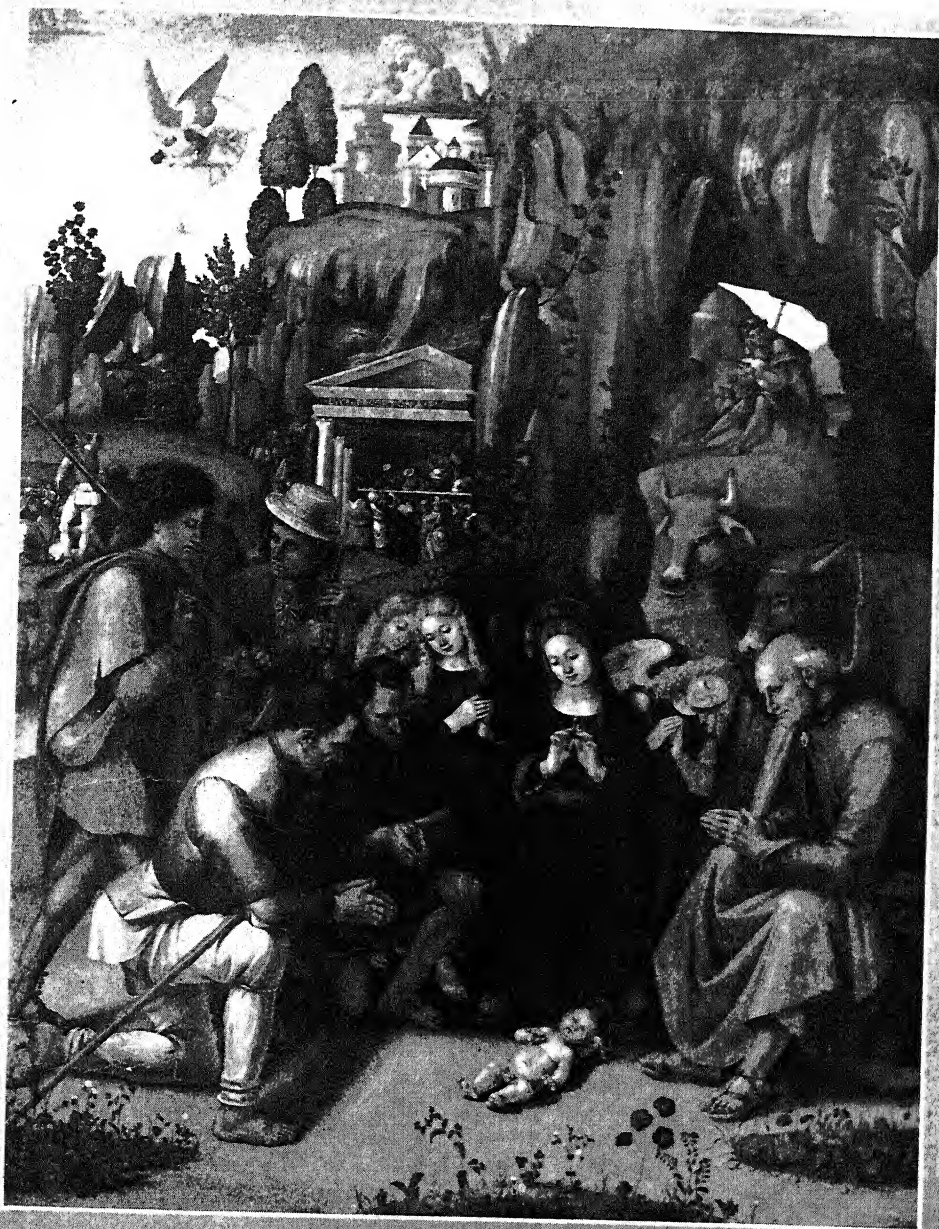


Photo by the National Gallery

This stately and spacious painting is Luca Signorelli's "Adoration of the Wise Men." The artist who tried

so hard to make things as they are has given us a scene full of life and movement.

tivity. The only light in the picture is that which shines from the face of the newborn Child and illumines the figure of Mary and the cattle lying in the background. Far off over the hills we can see the angel appearing

to the shepherds. The picture is dated in the month of May, 1423; and perhaps it was the season that led Gentile to put sprays of morning-glory, iris, and cornflower at the sides of the painting.



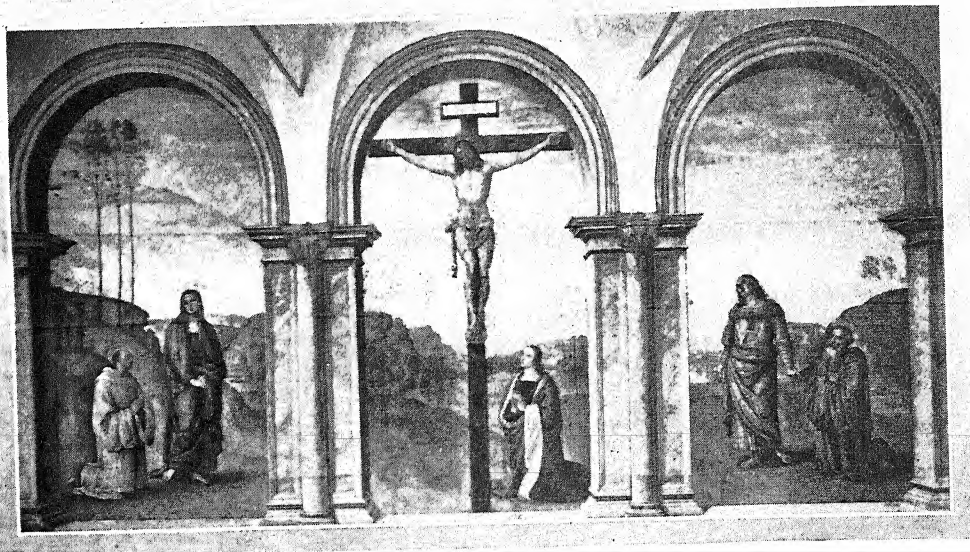


Photo by Alinari

Perugino is a painter of stillness and repose. His Crucifixion, above, is neither tragic nor dramatic; it

For a time after Gentile, the painters of Umbria ceased to be so gentle. The three great ones who came next were more strenuous.

Piero della Francesca (frän-chës'kă) was gentle only in his soft and delicate colors; otherwise he was stern and stately and magnificent. The figures in his paintings are rather like statues—very far away from real life, but drawn with a clear eye and a steady hand. He painted strong men who stand firmly on their feet and look straight at you, like those of many of the Florentines. Yet Piero lived among those Umbrian hills, and his pictures are full of a silvery air such as still hangs over them.

His greatest pictures, painted on the walls

seems to breathe the stillness of deep meditation. The arches are simple, the landscape quiet and vast.

of an Umbrian church, tell the story of the tree from which the cross of Christ was made.

In one of them there is a great battle scene, full of splendid horses and tall spears. Though they are all crowded together for the attack, the figures show no sort of confusion. Then there is the story of Constantine and his vision of the cross. Constantine lies dreaming in his tent as an angel appears with the cross in his hand. The whole picture is lighted by the glow of the angel, in the upper left corner, and the light falls on Constantine and his soldiers. How black the night around them looks, how deep and silent!

In his portraits Piero della Francesca painted people as he really saw



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

This Madonna and Child is attributed to Verrocchio. The Virgin holds her sweet-faced baby upon a ledge. Her cloak is dark blue with a border embroidered in gold, and her golden hair is draped with a veil as light as a cobweb. Her baby is golden-haired, too. At his feet are a rose and three bright cherries.

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them. The ruler of Urbino (*ōōr-bē'nō*), with his broken nose, was certainly no beauty, and Piero did nothing to make him look like one. But under the ugly nose he drew a powerful chin and a kindly mouth that leave you liking and admiring the man.

This painter had two pupils who were like their master in their eagerness and vigor. These were Melozzo da Forlì (*mā-lōt'sō dā fōr'lē*) and Luca Signorelli (*sē'nyō-rē'lē*).

Melozzo painted angels who are strong and full of life as well as beautiful. Those that he did for the church of the Holy Apostles in Rome are among the most beautiful angels ever painted. You can almost hear their rich voices singing out in praises of the Lord.

Luca Signorelli never cared whether his work was lovely in the eyes of those who saw it. He was interested only in the way the body is put together and the way it works. He had too, a vivid and terrible imagination, and he could paint the scene of the Last Judgment in all its horror. Even when he does the coming of the Wise Men he makes a spacious and stately picture, rather than a gay one like Gentile's.

### A Painter of Infinite Space and Peace

But the sweet Umbrian country comes back to us in the work of Pietro Perugino (*pyā'trō pā'rōō-jē'nō*). His painting of the Crucifixion is a surprising contrast by the side of many a Florentine picture. There is no crowd of people. The two figures in each

panel are very quiet and not even very expressive, though they are placed just where they should be to balance the picture. It is the spacious air around them, the beautiful landscape, and the distant blue of the sky that give the picture its wonderful serenity. Perugino was a discoverer. He found out

how to put infinite space and infinite peace into a picture. But he was not a great experimenter, like Uccello. He found a beautiful way to paint and rested content with it. He taught serenity to Raphael, as you may see if you look at their paintings together. And he himself was taught by another great Florentine, the painter Verrocchio (*vēr-rōk'kyō*).

The mention of that name will lead us back to Florence once more. We shall find a great deal happening there.

It is now the Florence of Lorenzo, greatest of the Medici—Lorenzo the Magnificent. The city is very gay. There are fine palaces decorated by the sculptors and painters, there are handsome villas in the country all around, and there are many gardens. Even more than his ancestors, Lorenzo is a lover of old Greece and

Rome. He wants Florence to be a second Athens, and he founds a school like the famous ones in that ancient capital of art. Himself a poet, Lorenzo gives a welcome to every author and artist. He takes them into his household and gives them a fine living. His gardens are full of the ancient carvings that have been recently dug up, and young artists go there to study and to copy.



Photo by Alinari

Verrocchio's David is quite different from Donatello's, although he has something of the same pose. He is a lithe and handsome youth, with the swagger of a young dandy.

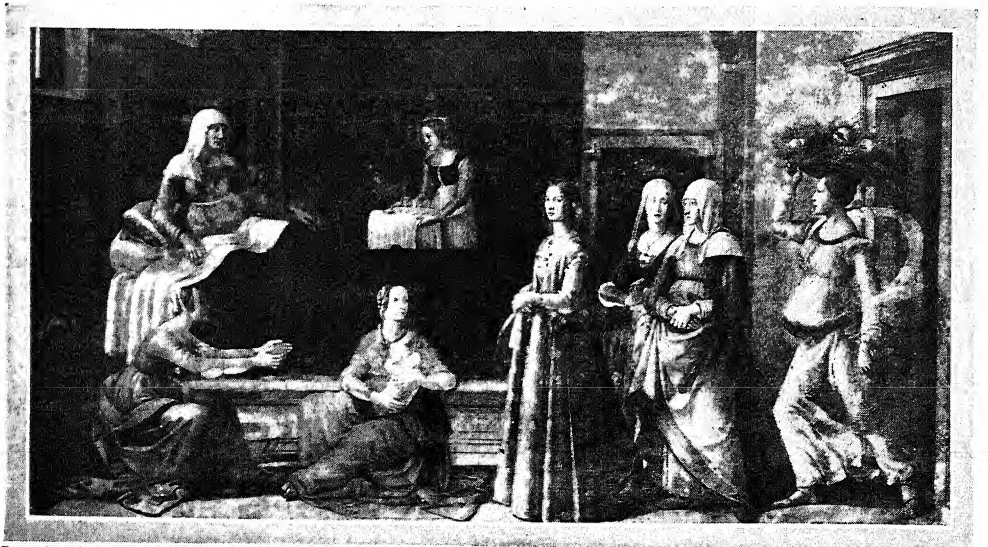


Photo by Alinari

Ghirlandaio is not a great painter—he is too fond of the obvious for that. But he pleases us to-day, with his pretty faces and charming color, just as he pleased the people about him. Above is his Birth of St. John the Baptist. The tall, queenly figure in the center is a portrait of a lady of his own day. Ghirlandaio made

many fine portraits. But see the woman who bears a basket of fruit upon her head and whose drapery swirls as she moves. What has she to do with this quiet scene? Nothing at all. She is just put there to look pretty, and Ghirlandaio would have done better to put her in a more appropriate spot.

A great age of art, it is also a great age of splendor, luxury, extravagance, display.

In the city there are two artists who have great studios and many workers. One of these is Andrea del Verrocchio, himself in turn a pupil of Donatello. A sculptor as well as a painter, Verrocchio is full of the exacting refinement of his time. He will carve a Madonna in a beautiful headdress, wearing a rich brooch; she must have the well-bred smile of a fine lady. But she will be very delicately carved. Verrocchio will always make her a beautiful lady as well as a beautiful mother.

He will carve David as a lithe and handsome youth with the swagger of a young dandy. Like his master

Donatello, he makes a heroic figure on horseback—of Colleoni, the soldier-leader of Venice. A more commanding and aggressive pose was never given to a rider than to this man, who looks as if he were just on the point of spurring his horse right over you.

As a painter we know Verrocchio chiefly through the work of his pupils. Indirectly Perugino may have been one of them, but Perugino went quietly on in his own way, giving little heed to his vigorous master or to anyone else—not even to that fellow-pupil who was so soon to show himself as one of the most brilliant of

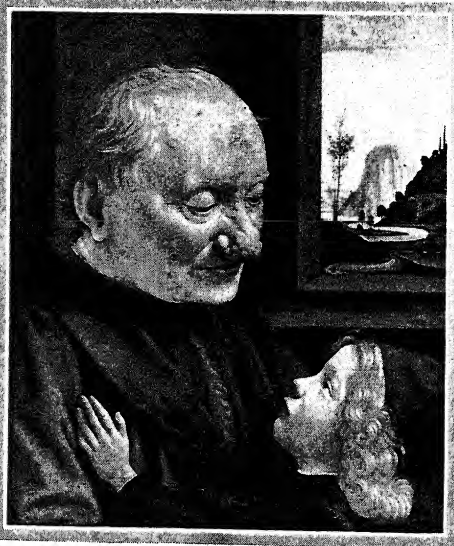


Photo by Alinari

This painting by Ghirlandaio shows good drawing and is full of charm. The old man whose nose is so amazingly smothered in warts is full of tender feeling for his loving, trustful little grandson.

all men in any age. We mean Leonardo da Vinci, but of him we must speak later.



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Photo by Alinari

This is Botticelli's "Primavera," or Spring. Here are Mercury, Venus, and the three Graces. To the right is Flora in a flowery dress, scattering blossoms as she walks with graceful step. The secret of Botticelli's movement lies mostly in his use of line. He is probably the only European artist who has been able to

paint rhythmic line as the artists of China and Japan have done it. With one swirling line he gives us hair lifted softly by the wind. With another he models a wrist so that it looks round and solid. He, more than any other artist, has been able to give us painting that has the rhythm of music.

The other great studio was that of Domenico Ghirlandaio (gēr'lān-dā'yō). A most contented spirit, this man loved nothing better than to paint his Florence in all its gayety of color, and the people in Florence loved him because he made them so attractive in his pictures. In 1485 he agreed with the rich Tuornabuoni (twōr'nā-bwō'nē) family to decorate the church of Santa Maria Novella (mā-rē'ā nō-vēl'lā), where the fine people of the city went. He covered the walls with gay and graceful pictures of the life of the Virgin and of John the Baptist. At least those are the sub-

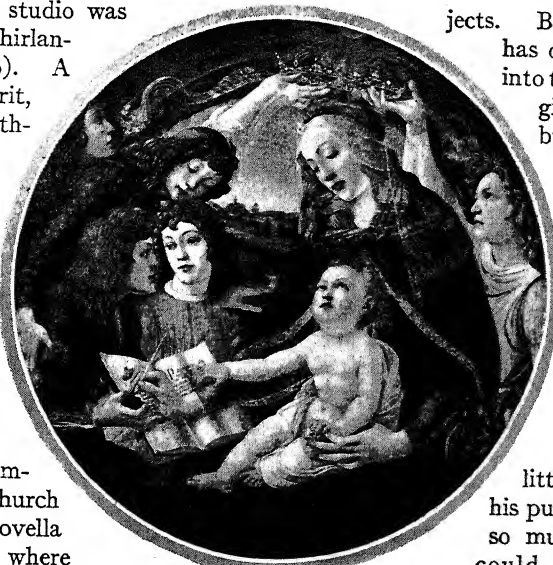


Photo by Alinari

Botticelli's "Magnificat" shows us the Coronation of the Virgin. The heads are thoughtful and drooping. Have you ever seen faces like these before? No—not unless you have seen them in another of the artist's paintings, for no one but Botticelli has been able to paint faces so unusual—so full of the beauty of another world.

jects. But what the artist has done has been to put into the pictures the pretty girls of the Tuornabuoni family coming to see the infant St. John or watching his baptism. The pictures are very beautiful, but we have come a long way from the reverence of older artists.

Ghirlandaio must have been a little worried by one of his pupils who could draw so much better than he could himself—a wild young fellow named Michelangelo Buonarroti (bwō'-nār-rō'tē). Sometimes the master's eyes must have seen a little scorn in those of the pupil, a little pride in



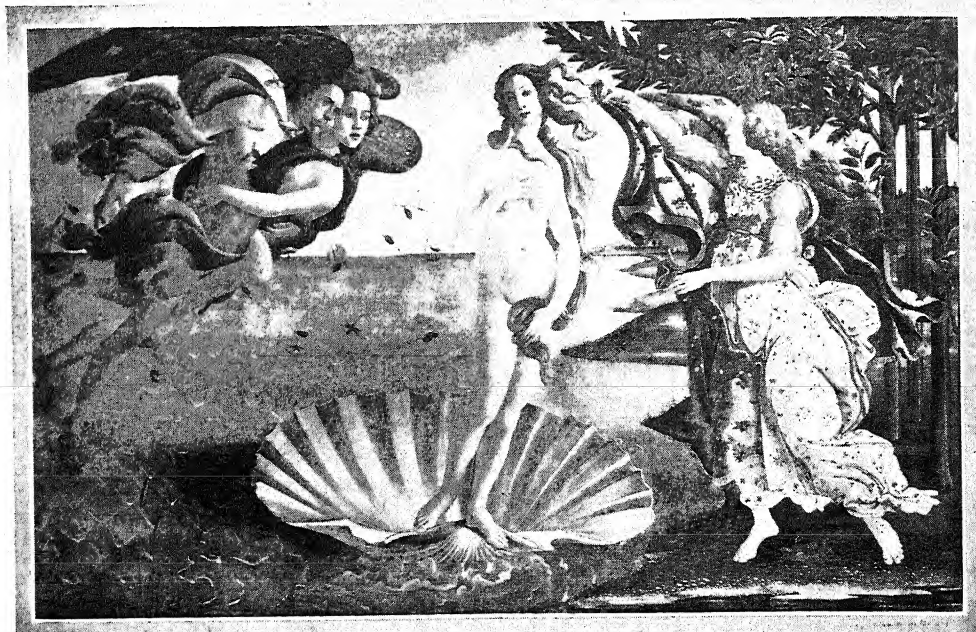


Photo by Alinari

Out of the dreams of Botticelli was painted this exquisite picture of "The Birth of Venus." The goddess of love and beauty has just risen from the sea foam and is about to be clad by one of the hours. Then

the feeling that he could do greater things than these pictures of pretty ladies. It made Ghirlandaio uneasy.

Thus Ghirlandaio and Verrochio each had a pupil far greater than himself. But Leonardo and Michelangelo must come into another story.

Yet Ghirlandaio has his great moments. He made a picture of an amazingly ugly old man with a nose all smothered in warts, and still kept it beautiful in its tender feeling and in the love and trust of the little boy who reaches up to the old man so fondly. And what a lovely toy landscape shows outside the window!

He made a beautiful picture of the bride of Lorenzo Tuornabuoni. She seems to stand for the very spirit of her Florence, gay and lovely and secure! But she died in 1488, and nine years later her husband was put to death at the order of a monk of San Marco, whose eloquent voice was thundering through Florence denouncing the luxury and vice of the city. It was no other than Savonarola (säv'ô-nä-rô'lä), calling on the people to repent of their gay lives, give up

two of the winds, with swelling cheeks, will waft her over the waves to join the other gods in their home on Mt. Olympus. The whole picture is filled by a gentle, wistful charm and a haunting beauty.

their worldly art, and turn in humility to God. With this man, at the close of the century, the mad, gay days of Florence draw to a close, and the days of turmoil and reform approach. But there is one artist who belongs both to the gay Florence of old and to the new Florence of Savonarola. That is Sandro Botticelli (sän'drô bö't'të-chë'l'ë).

#### Sandro's Strange Nickname

It is a nickname, and really means "casks." At first it was the nickname of his brother, but somehow it clung to Sandro, and he is nearly always known as Botticelli.

He studied under his brother and then under Lippo Lippi. Being very gifted and sensitive, he was quick to pick up the styles of artists who were already famous. Yet he was never a mere imitator, for he was an independent and creative artist. He must have had hands twice as sensitive as those of other men, even of artists, and eyes that saw fairy things which others did not see. His faces have a dreamy, wistful look all their own.

Botticelli was a great favorite of the

## THE HISTORY OF ART

Medici, and he learned much from the poets and scholars who mingled in the gay life of their court. In his Adoration of the Magi he has painted portraits of all the Medici family—old Cosimo kissing the infant's foot, and Piero and his sons kneeling at the right. In the right-hand corner, standing and looking at you, is Botticelli himself. He looks a little slow and matter-of-fact—almost heavy of wit, indeed, and not at all what you would expect him to be.

One of his most famous pictures is the *Primavera* (prē'mā-vā'rā), or Spring. It is filled with figures from the old mythology, Venus, Mercury, the three Graces, and Flora scattering flowers. But it is not Greek or Roman: it is altogether Italian. The model for Venus was a beautiful Florentine lady. And all the lovely faces and dancing figures are a Florentine dream of an old Greek story.

Botticelli also painted the beautiful bride of Lorenzo Tuornabuoni. Once more he brought in the old Roman gods and goddesses. The bride is being presented to Venus by the Graces. Painted on the walls of a villa to celebrate the wedding, the picture is now badly worn away, and the figure of the gracious bride is partly gone.

Botticelli was one of the great throng who heard the voice of the great reforming monk.

### The Thundering Monk of Florence

Savonarola came to Fra Angelico's convent about 1485, and rapidly grew famous as a preacher. In flaming words he thundered at the luxury and vice of Florence. He called for great bonfires to burn up all the vain and silly things so dear to the people of Florence, including their pagan works of fine art. He raged against the tyrants who were ruling Florence, until Lorenzo could not but take note of him. Indignant at first, Lorenzo finally went to see the monk and possibly to ask for his advice. But Savonarola refused to receive him.

"I shall remain, but you must leave," was his message to the visitor. And very soon after that Lorenzo was dead in his villa.

Botticelli became an ardent follower of the monk, and his later pictures are nearly all religious. When Savonarola himself met death at the hands of the fickle Florentines, the painter bitterly made his picture of Calumny, supposed to be a copy of a Greek one. An innocent prisoner is dragged before a foolish judge. Ignorance and Suspicion are whispering slander in the judge's ear, while naked Truth pleads in vain.

Far pleasanter is the artist's picture of the Nativity, with its wreath of dancing angels above the manger where the Child reaches up to the Mother, while below there are other angels welcoming souls into Paradise. The picture has the singing grace of the *Primavera*.

### Sketches That Leap and Dance

In some ways the most remarkable work of this gifted artist is seen in his little drawings to illustrate the "Divine Comedy" of Dante. They are hardly more than scratches on the paper, and yet the tiny figures leap and dance over the pages. They are so delicate that they almost seem to twinkle.

And so we come to the end of a marvelous century of art. We are down to the year 1500. Of course there were scores of other painters in the century, many of them doing good work and leaving pictures that still adorn the churches, palaces, and great galleries. And there was one man so amazing that we have kept him for a separate story. That is the great Leonardo da Vinci, possibly the most astonishing genius that the world has ever seen. Along with him we are going to talk of Michelangelo, another mighty genius, who lives far over into the next century. The story of these two men and of their noble art will be found on a later page.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

No. 12

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### TWO SUPREME ARTISTS OF ALL TIME

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

How Leonardo was able to make astounding promises, 11-149  
Why he loved to put meaning in the faces he painted, 11-151  
How he pioneered in the use of light and shade, 11-151  
A universal genius, 11-152  
Why the "Mona Lisa" is famous, 11-154  
How Michelangelo marked an end and a beginning, 11-156

The ill fortune that drove him on tirelessly, 11-158  
Why he was always undertaking more than he could finish, 11-161  
How his mental and muscular fury made him the world's most powerful artist, 11-162  
Why he and Leonardo typify the spirit of the Renaissance, 11-162

#### *Related Material*

Albrecht Dürer, a great German artist of this time, 11-207-12  
Charles the VIII of France invades Italy, 6-176; and is crowned king of Naples, 6-302  
Saint Peter's at Rome begun, 11-484-86  
Pope Julius II, patron of Michelangelo, 12-95

Dante and Petrarch, poets of the Renaissance, 13-59-61  
Story of the great Medici family, 6-301-2  
Rabelais, a great mirth provoker, is born in France, 13-105-6  
Martin Luther begins his work in Germany, 13-540-43

#### *Practical Applications*

The works of Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci are to the

world of art what school textbooks are to education.

#### *Habits and Attitudes*

Though both Leonardo and Michelangelo were remarkably strong men, their variety of in-

terests was so great that much of their work was left incomplete.

#### *Leisure-time Activities*

Go to the library and look into the wealth of story and fable

about these two giants of the arts.

#### *Summary Statement*

The lives and work of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo stand

out like mountain peaks in the world's history of art.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

### No. 13

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## THE GRAND STYLE OF THE SPLENDID RAPHAEL

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Raphael's genius for learning quickly from those around him, 11-165            | to his "fresco factory," 11-167  |
| What Raphael's instinct for success did to his work, 11-166                    | Why his "Sistine Madonna" is one of the world's finest paintings, 11-168                                 |
| Handsome and admired, he lived like a prince among the artists of Rome, 11-167 | He is not mightier than Leonardo or Michelangelo, but his style is more harmonious and perfected, 11-169 |
| How he was called to the Vatican by Pope Julius II, 11-167                     | Why he was imitated so easily and so long, 11-169  |
| How his remarkable success led   |  |

### *Things to Think About*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Raphael never had the struggle with his art that Giotto, Leonardo, and Michelangelo had. | Reflected in his style?   |
| How do you think this is re-   | In what use of the efforts of his contemporaries did Raphael's success lie? |

### *Related Material*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Leonardo and Michelangelo, two supreme masters, 11-149-62 | The Roman Catholic church and the Renaissance, 13-82 |
| Story of the fiery Julius II, 12-95                       | Italy was a storm center in 1500, 6-302              |
| The building of Saint Peter's at Rome, 11-484-86          | Machiavelli, "the devil," 13-69                      |
| Raphael's designs for tapestries, 12-141-42               | Rossetti and the "Pre-Raphaelite" movement, 13-256   |

### *Practical Applications*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| It has been said that Raphael was one of the most widely imitated of all painters. Examine the paintings in your home, or any | other painting with which you are familiar, to see if you can find traces of his style and influence. |
|---|---|

### *Summary Statement*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| For a good while after their day, Raphael and Michelangelo were the two great models for the newer artists. Yet the great 16th | century comes to a rather shabby close with vulgar people trying to be grand. |
|--|---|

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*





The "Sistine Madonna" is probably the most famous of Raphael's paintings. One of the things that make it so beautiful is its simple but fine composition—it is

almost like a pyramid. If we follow the line of the kneeling figures, our glance is directed upward to the Madonna—who thus seems all the more majestic.

## The GRAND STYLE of the SPLENDID RAPHAEL

*Hardly Any Painter Has Been More Admired in His Own Day or More Influential in the Centuries Afterward*

**P**AINTING is not my trade—Raphael is the man for that!" So said the famous Michelangelo (mī'kēl-ān'jē-lō) when he was ordered to paint the pictures in the Sistine (sīs'tēn) Chapel which he did not want to start but which, once started, he made into some of the greatest paintings in the world.

And painting was certainly Raphael's trade. To be sure, there was no such intense fire burning in his breast as in that of Michelangelo or of Leonardo da Vinci (lā'ō-nār'dō dā vēm'-chē). But there was a masterful genius in him, all the same, and first of all it was a genius for learning. Never did a painter learn more from the other painters around him, or use what he had learned to better purpose. Raphael (rā'fā-ēl) lived for only thirty-seven years, from 1483 to 1520, but in that short time he left us many a monument of his genius; and in his own day he was possibly the most popular and successful painter who ever lived. Fame came to him early.

Raphael was an Umbrian, born at Urbino (ōōr-bē'nō). His father was a painter before him, and must surely have been the boy's first teacher. About the age of sixteen the boy went into the workshop of Perugino (pā'rōō-jē'nō), where he learned his master's style so fully that his own paintings from this time would surely pass for his master's if he had not put his signature on them. Some five years later, having now won fame

at home in Urbino, Raphael left for the city of Florence, chief center at the moment of the vast creative movement in Italian art.

He first arrived in Florence in the year 1504. Michelangelo had just finished his gigantic statue of David, and

Leonardo was painting his masterpiece in the "Mona Lisa." A monk of San Marco, Bartolommeo (bār'-tō-lōm-mē'ō) by name, was making noble and beautiful pictures of the Holy Family, and a certain Andrea del Sarto (ān-drā'ä dēl sār'tō) was another leader in the rich artistic product of those proud days in Florence.

Among such men of genius came the young artist from Urbino, and what did he discover? He found that his own way in painting was all out of date. The sweet and gentle style of Perugino which he had so fully mastered was out of fashion in the heroic world of Michelangelo or the subtle one of Leonardo. But this was no bar to a man like Raphael. With his genius for learning, he had caught the

secrets of one teacher, and he could now master those of another or of many others. In great measure he soon learned his trade all over again.

He studied Leonardo, and he studied Bartolommeo. He could hardly study Michelangelo as yet, for that great artist had done scarcely any painting at this time. But Raphael also went where all the great artists of Florence had gone to learn—to the



Photo by Allinari

This lovely Madonna and Child is a detail from Andrea del Sarto's "Madonna of the Harpies." The painting, which is one of Andrea's masterpieces, got its name from the winged creatures out of Greek mythology which ornament the tall pedestal on which the Virgin stands.



Photos by Alinari

Andrea del Sarto painted many charming and graceful groups. Above is his "Holy Family."

paintings of Masaccio (mä-sät'chō) in the Chapel of the Carmine (kär-mē'nā). He is said to have copied the famous frescoes in that chapel seven times. An excellent critic of his own work, he knew exactly what his painting needed—the realism and solidity of Masaccio, the delicate form of Leonardo, the stateliness of Bartolommeo. From each of these the young painter took just what he needed, and he took no more.

Within a year he was showing how much he had learned in his portrait of Maddalena Doni (mäd'dä-lā'nä dō'nē), a picture far beyond the power of his earlier period under Perugino. By the time of painting this, Raphael had evidently seen the Mona Lisa of Leonardo, for he has imitated the pose of that famous lady.

#### Raphael's Instinct for Success

This newer work of Raphael is a good example of something that is to be seen in many a picture still to come from his brush. In addition to a mighty gift in art, the man had the very surest instinct for success. In fact, if there is any criticism to be made of him, it would probably have to do with that trait



"St. Agnes," whose lamb rests so confidently at her knee, is attributed to Andrea del Sarto.

of careful calculation for success and popularity. It is as if he knew almost too well what would make his pictures look perfect to every eye. Giotto (jōt'tō) and other older painters, like Michelangelo and other newer ones, had striven and struggled heroically to give their figures an urgent meaning. Raphael does not struggle, he does not seem to need to struggle; but if his figures fall into almost perfect form as if without an effort, they still fail to carry so much meaning as do those of men like Michelangelo.

#### Raphael Learns from Michelangelo

Very well did Michelangelo know that. When his great work on the Sistine Chapel was about half done, the chapel was thrown open for a time to the public. Raphael came in with the rest to see, and we need not be told that he went away to put something of Michelangelo's tumultuous style into his own work. And when Michelangelo saw how placidly another artist could borrow what he had created out of such bitter toil and anguish, he cried out that Raphael owed his art to study more than to nature. A proud soul like Michelangelo would never be very



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sympathetic with a Raphael. Raphael was genial and modest, while Michelangelo was anything but genial and had no patience with modesty. But this does not make Raphael any less of a genius. He saw all that was great in other painters, and he borrowed wisely and serenely all he needed from their work. In the end he made out of it all some of the greatest pictures in the world; and we owe those pictures, not to Michelangelo or Leonardo or Bartolommeo, who all furnished many a trait for them, but to the genius of Raphael in combining all the traits and adding a harmony of his own.

In a short time Raphael was painting the famous series of beautiful Madonnas that we remember first when we think of him. The "Madonna of the Chair," the "Sistine Madonna," and the "Belle Jardinière" (běl zhār'-dē'nyěr') are only three of the many that he left us.

They are among the most highly prized pictures in the world.

At the age of twenty-five Raphael was called to Rome. It was his fellow townsman Bramante (brä-män'tā), enemy of Michelangelo, who brought him there to have his part in the great outburst of art that was filling Rome with masterpieces of painting. About this time the bitterly disappointed Michelangelo was starting on his magnificent frescoes for the Sistine Chapel, and there could hardly be a greater contrast between the tortured, heroic work of the one artist and the serene and beautiful production of the other. The contrast lay deep in the characters of the two men. Handsome and lovable, Raphael was soon surrounded by a host of friends and admirers in Rome. He lived the life of a prince among artists.

It was the stormy Pope Julius II, a man

who knew what he wanted from his artists, who set Raphael at work covering the walls of some of the rooms in the papal palace of the Vatican (vat'i-kān) with frescoes. Raphael felt that he was now called on for the best that was in him, and in his frescoes he soon proved that he was the peer of any other artist.

In one room there are four magnificent pictures covering the four walls, with great semicircular arches swinging up to frame them. Above one of the pictures there is the arch of the sky which seems to provide an infinite space behind the picture. In a golden

heaven sits Christ with the Virgin and Saint John, and with the twelve apostles enthroned on a curving bank of cloud. Below is an altar with the symbol of Christ upon it, and all around are

those who have been witnesses on earth to the gospel—martyrs and teacher and fathers of the

church. The great crowd of figures gives an impression of majesty, while the wonderful grouping and gorgeous color offer a serene and perfect harmony as gentle as Perugino's but infinitely richer.

On another wall we see a vast hall with round vaults and domes that seem to stretch backward as remotely as the sky in the first picture. This is the famous painting of the "School of Athens." It shows the venerable Plato and the younger and vigorous Aristotle, with their pupils crowding around them listening to the masters or debating among themselves.

### The Beginning of the "Fresco Factory"

It is by no means enough to say that these pictures are wondrously spacious. They seem to lift us off our feet and to carry us far



Photo by Alinari

This exquisite work, Raphael's "Madonna of the Chair," was painted after the artist had been to Rome. Raphael's assistants helped him with much of his work, but this painting was made entirely by the master's hand.



## THE HISTORY OF ART

back into their depths. They act upon us as does some great piece of music, some swelling strain of a full orchestra marvelously blended into rich harmony.

It was about the time of these works that Raphael saw the pictures that Michelangelo was painting in the Sistine Chapel. They made him feel that his own paintings were too calm and rather lifeless. That is why he tried to put a certain tumult into his next work. But tumult of any kind was not a natural thing for the gentle and contented Raphael, and when he strove for drama and energy he made pictures that were too restless—pictures that seem to jump out at you too much as you step into the room.

This was partly because Raphael was not the man for vigorous drama, and partly because he had grown so successful that he had to employ a whole flock of helpers to do all the pictures to fill the orders flowing in upon him. Someone has called it Raphael's "fresco factory," and it certainly did a flourishing business.

### The Great Portraits of Raphael

One of the frescoes on which Raphael himself worked has in it a portrait of the fiery Pope Julius II. This pope died soon afterward, to be followed by Leo X, a man who loved beautiful things and who worked his artists very hard. Under him Michelangelo was sent to work in Florence, while Leonardo was called to Rome. As for Raphael, his hands were very full indeed. He was made

architect for the cathedral of Saint Peter, and superintendent of all the excavations of ancient remains in Rome; he was commanded to finish the rooms in the Vatican, to paint a palace and plan two others, to design mosaics for a church, to design sixteen great

tapestries and half a dozen altar pieces, and, among other things to paint a portrait of the pope.

Even the fresco factory could not keep pace with all this. Raphael was literally worked to death. He lived only seven or eight years longer. But in these last years he found himself again. He gave up the stormier style which had never fitted him, and once more became his serene self.

To this last period belongs his famous Sistine Madonna, now in Dresden. With a glorious sky for the background, Saint Sixtus and Saint Barbara kneel on either side of the picture, while in the center the Virgin appears in a softly flowing cloak which goes over her head and is gathered under her arm. Easily and gracefully she holds her sturdy child, while in the sky behind thousands of little cloudlike angel faces look out from the distance like a soft blue haze. It is possibly the most beautiful of all madonnas.

Aside from such pictures, Raphael was one of the greatest of portrait painters. Witness his portrait of his friend Baldessare Castiglione (bäl'dēs-sä'rä käs'tē-lyō'nā), the perfect courtier, painted in remarkable grays and blacks that are still anything but drab in effect, but rich and warm. Witness his Pope Julius, with the rich red cape, the fiery

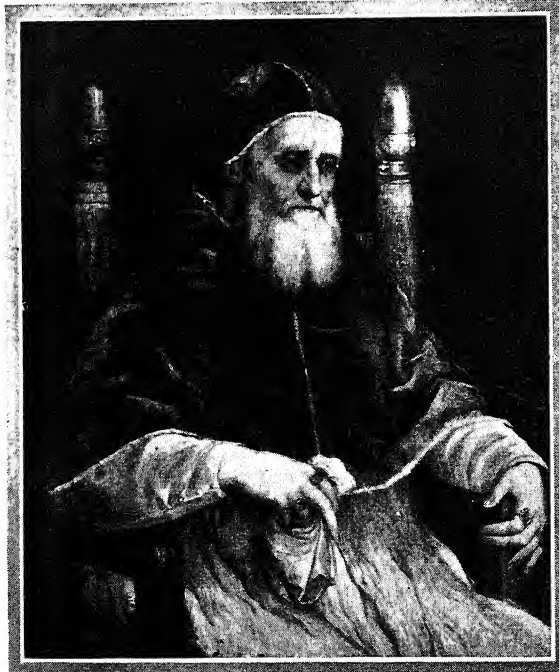


Photo by Alinari

This is the celebrated portrait Raphael made of Pope Julius II. The Pope is not quite so stormy here as history paints him, but Raphael has given him a determined mouth, and eyes that hint of fire. His cape is a rich red.



Photos by Alinari

The statue of Aeolus above is attributed to Gianda Bologna. The figure is winged—as we should expect a god of the winds to be—and he seems about to whirl away to set the skies in motion.



Cellini has shown the young Ganymede seated on the back of an eagle. Jove, as the Greek myth will tell you, sent the eagle down to carry off the youth, who became cupbearer to the gods.

eyes, and the mouth set in a firm, straight line.

In the spring of 1520 all Rome was saddened. The body of Raphael lay in state before his unfinished picture of the Transfiguration. He had had a career of unusual brilliance, and he had given to his century its grand style. This was not really a mightier style than that of Leonardo or of Michelangelo, but it was more harmonious and more nearly perfected. Just because it was less heroic and individual, it was a style that other men could understand and imitate. For a long time, in many a land, Raphael was often held to be the perfect painter, and ever since his day artists have gone to him for harmony, for majesty and

dignity. Indeed, Raphael came to be rather a way of painting than a mere person.

For a good while after their day, Raphael and Michelangelo were two great models for the newer artists. But these artists were not great creative geniuses; they were smaller men who kept on copying the creators who were now gone. And if Raphael himself had found the style of Michelangelo too much for him, how much more pitiful were the efforts of the lesser copyists that followed! Their main idea was to startle people with great flashing pictures. The art of portrait painting was the only one to keep much of its dignity, and in general the great sixteenth century comes to a rather shabby close with vulgar people trying to be grand.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

No. 14

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### THE FAMOUS ARTISTS OF OLD VENICE

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

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- How the boy Titian is said to have painted a Madonna with the juices of flowers, 11-177
- Why Titian found it necessary "to touch his people up with a fine romantic air," 11-178
- Why the splash and flare of light in Titian's last work led to the decay and death of the great styles of the Renaissance, 11-180
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- Why Tintoretto, the "thunderbolt," made no drawings, 11-186
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- Why Italy, from this time on, did but little more than give her glorious past to others, 11-188

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- What two different feelings are to be found in "The Concert," by Titian and Giorgione? 11-178
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#### *Summary Statement*

- As the fire and achievement of the Renaissance began to die out in Italy, the artists turned more and more toward the use of startling effects that said little.

(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)



Photo by the National Gallery

This view of Venice is by Canaletto, an eighteenth century Venetian painter who has given us many delightful scenes of his native city. He is noted par-

ticularly for his fine perspective and for his masterful use of color—things for which earlier Venetian artists, also, had been noted.

## The FAMOUS ARTISTS of OLD VENICE

*How a Group of Painters and Sculptors, with Titian at Their Head, Made the City of Canals a Place of Beauty*

**I**N EARLIER pages of this book we have told many a story of Italian art and Italian artists in the great days when Italy was the home of nearly all the arts. Yet all the while we have been leaving out something.

Far up in the north of Italy lay a rich seaport which through her trading had come to know the gorgeous East and the Gothic North about as well as she knew her own land. This was Venice, of course, queen of the Adriatic, a city of noble merchants who took little part in the struggles of the other Italian cities. The Venetians came into great riches through their vast commerce, and then when they had won their way to leisure they

turned their minds to making their city the most sumptuous one in Italy.

They made over their marshy islands just off the coast into something like a fairy city that seemed to float upon the water. They had canals in place of streets, with their fine houses rising out of the water on either side, with palace after palace casting its shimmering image on the liquid surfaces. The air was clear and the sun was very bright; and the Venetians who saw their ships with ruddy sails coming into port would glow with the thought of all the gold and ivory they brought, all the precious stones and silks and gorgeous carpets from the East. In such a city one could not help being gay.



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In a place like Venice painting would flourish more than sculpture. There were so few places to put up statues! In such a place we should expect a great deal of brilliant color in the painting; and for a long time, indeed, the Venetians were content with the shimmer of the old Byzantine (bī-zān'tīn) style in art, which we have already told you of. The newer painting of Italy came to Venice rather late. But about the year 1410, when the citizens wanted to decorate the splendid palaces of their dukes, it began to be said that the old Eastern style was out of date, and that down in Southern Italy there was an entirely new art of painting. Then the Venetians looked around for one of their own artists who would know about the modern style, and found that they had no one who had mastered it.

They had to send away for painters. They sent for Gentile da Fabriano (jěn-tē'lā dā fā-brē-ä'nō), Pisanello da Verona (pē'zā-nē'lō dā vā-rō'nā), and Antonello da Messina (än-tō-nē'lō dā mēs-sē'nā). These men taught the Venetians the story-telling art of Florence and Umbria; and Antonello, who had studied from Flemish artists, showed them a way of using oil glazes that made marvelously brilliant color which never faded. After that Venice may be said to have gone wild about painting.

Just before this time a Venetian named Jacopo Bellini (jä-kō'pō bēl-lē'nē), a painter and a great traveler, was wandering around Italy taking notes on all the interesting things he saw. He came to Padua and visited its famous school of painting. There he met Andrea Mantegna (än-drā'ä mǎn-tān'yä), and his daughter gave her hand to Mantegna in marriage.

That happy wedding was also a happy

event for Venetian painting. Old Jacopo Bellini had two sons who were painters, and were filled with the Venetian love of color. And now into the family came a brother-in-law whose great interest was to paint figures that would look as rounded and solid as statues. The combination was exactly what

the art of Venice needed. The Bellini brothers added the rich glow of Venetian color to Mantegna's solid forms, and so produced the proud art of their native city.

Old Jacopo died about 1470, leaving his notebook and his art to his sons. The elder of these, Gentile (jěn-tē'lā), was a traveler like his father. Called to the court at Constantinople, he there learned the delicate and exquisite brushwork of the Eastern painters. He brought back a portrait of a Mohammedan prince that looks more like a Persian painting than an Italian one. Then he used his skill in painting the brilliant processions that

the Venetians used to love. In his picture of the Corpus Christi (kōr'pūs krīs'tī) procession we may see the whole square of St. Mark's, with its great church in the background and with the procession winding through the square clad in the most gorgeous colors.

In this picture we can see one of the great differences from the pictures of the southern painters. The painters of Florence had a passionate interest in human beings, but had no great love for painting the outdoors except as a mere background for their human figures. But the Venetians, possibly because of their longer northern twilight, felt that the golden outdoor light of the late afternoon was as interesting and beautiful as any human beings, and they strove to wrap their pictures in its glow.

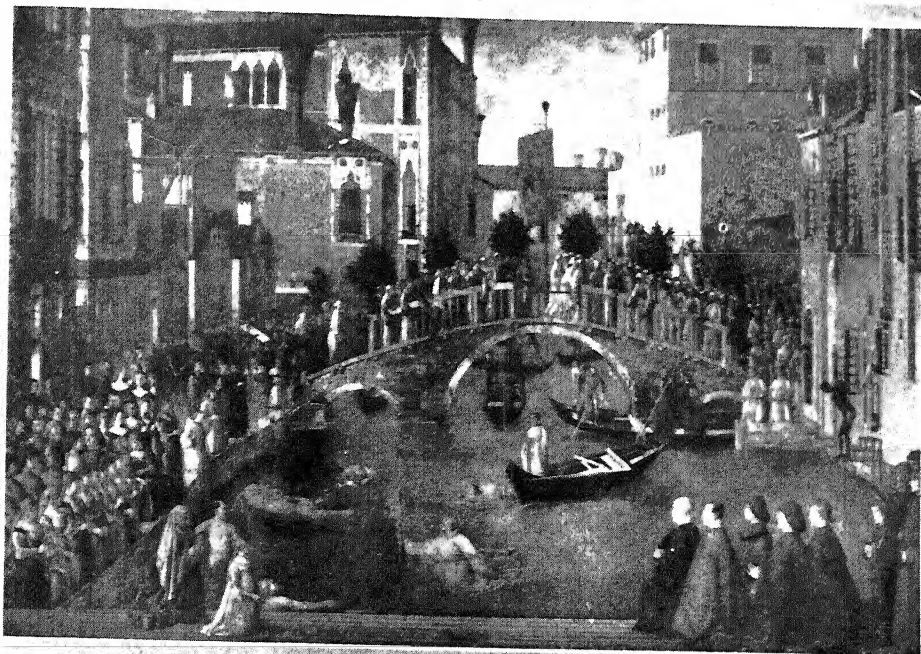
Gentile's story-telling art was carried over



Photo by the Louvre

This interesting portrait of a condottiere—or soldier-leader—is the work of Antonello da Messina, who was one of the first of the Italian painters to study the way the Flemish masters used oil in painting. No one could miss the force of the clear eyes and firm chin in the painting above.

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Photos by Alinari

This is Gentile Bellini's painting of the miraculous finding of a bit of the true cross. Here beneath a clear sky are high dignitaries, wealthy citizens, and

plump and pretty ladies—so typical of Venice—all marvelously spread out in a spacious scene flanked by charming Venetian buildings.



The Madonna and Child above is the work of Jacopo Bellini. The winged cherubs in the background look like bright little medallions.



Gentile Bellini's portrait of the Sultan shows how well he had learned the delicate and exquisite brushwork of the Eastern painters.



Photo by Alinari, Florence

Carpaccio has told the story of St. Ursula in a series of paintings of which the above is one. They are as charming as a fairy tale. The artist seems to

have been fond of animals, and you will not have to look far among his paintings to find a dog or a little bird understandingly drawn.

into the realm of fairy tale by Vittorio Carpaccio (vēt-tō'rē-ō kār-pāt'chō). We can see this, for instance, when Carpaccio paints the story of St. Ursula, who was a princess. The painting is full of turreted castles, of pavilions by the water where fine boats await the princess and her followers, and of lovely ladies clad in rose and blue, in deep, rich red, and in the softest yellow.

All of Carpaccio's pictures reflect the color of life in his own city. They also tell us how full the city must have been of Eastern travelers, for the artist paints the bearded foreigners in their long, loose robes and turbans as if he had seen a great many of them.

Giovanni (jō-vān'nē) Bellini, the younger brother in the family, had a great gift for painting the warm glow of twilight. He





Photos by Alinari and Anderson

Giovanni Bellini's Madonnas are among the loveliest that we have. They are always gentle and

serene, but grand, too, and glowing with rich color. Above is his "Madonna and Child with Saints."

seems to have admired and studied Mantegna more than his brother did, and in turn Mantegna learned to soften his pictures with Giovanni's light. It is interesting to compare two pictures on the same subject as they were painted by the two brothers-in-law.

It is a flat and rolling country, with nothing looking sharp as in Mantegna's work. The air is full of the golden peace of twilight. The world is infinitely quiet, and Christ is alone in it, with all his followers asleep.

The subject is the Agony in the Garden where Christ prayed before the crucifixion. The painting of Mantegna shows sharp, clear-cut rocks that rise strangely from the ground and seem to crowd the picture up toward you. You may hardly notice the kneeling figure of Jesus, but all the brittle sharpness of the scene will speak to you of distress. In



This is one of the finest portraits ever painted. It is a picture of the doge Leonardo Loredano, and is attributed to Giovanni Bellini—the only portrait of his that has come down to us.

This outdoor peace is seen in many of Giovanni's pictures, especially in a little painting of Paradise which looks like a gentle fairyland bathed in the softest light one can imagine.

Giovanni is well known for his Madonnas. In these he used Mantegna's method of painting his canvas as if it were a deep room of which the frame was part of the decoration. There is

always a rich and glowing color in the pictures, and a gentle dignity; they are among the loveliest Madonnas that we have.



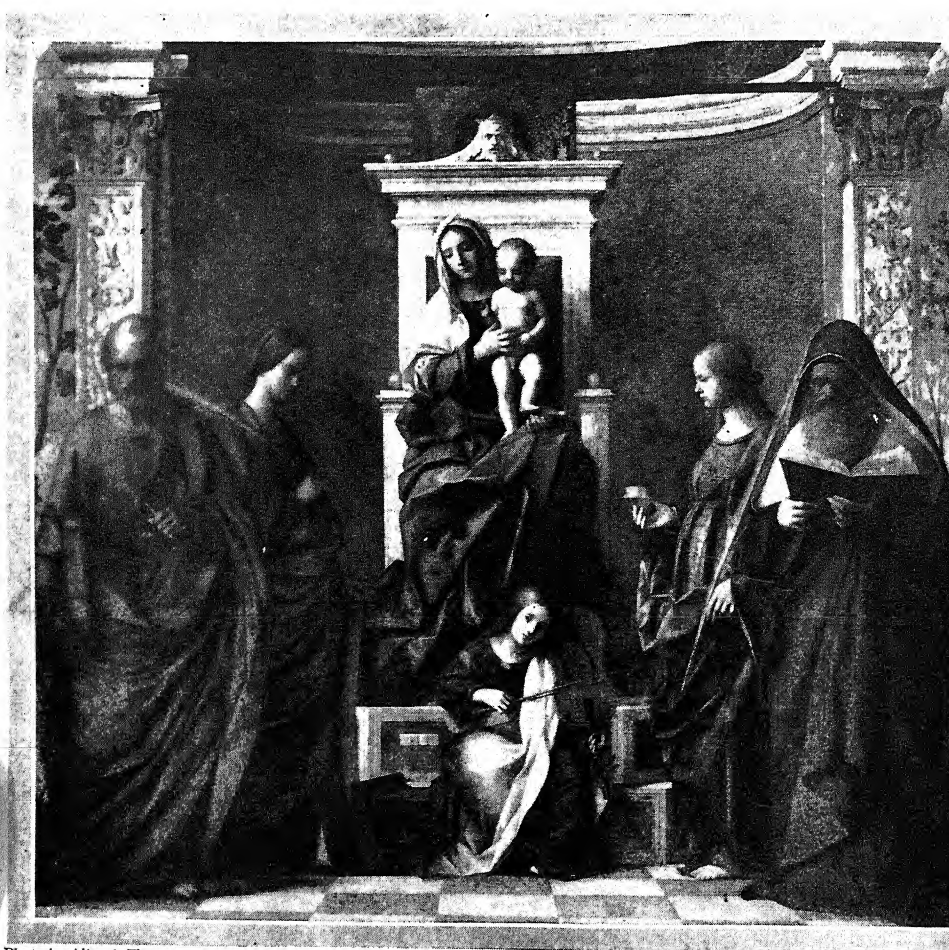


Photo by Alinari, Florence

In this painting of the enthroned Madonna with four saints, Giovanni Bellini has used Mantegna's method of painting his canvas as if it were a deep room.

Toward the very end of the fifteenth century a big and handsome mountain boy came down into Venice to seek his fortune. He was called "Big George," for that is what his name of Giorgione (jôr-jō'nā) means. It is just possible that when Michelangelo (mī-kēl-ān'jē-lō) came up to Venice, this Giorgione was at work in the studio of Giovanni Bellini, and that Michelangelo may have seen him there. The two were of about the same age, for Giorgione had been born in 1478.

But in his native mountains his eyes had seen different things from Michelangelo's, and all his life they were going to see people mainly as bits of color in a landscape. What

The frame is a part of the decoration. This painting is in a church in Venice, and is one of the most imposing of the artist's altarpieces.

they really saw were lovely dreams that began in his native mountains and wove themselves into pictures of a country where no man has ever been—a beautiful hilly country where people seem to have no cares and nothing to do but stand about or lie around in graceful attitudes while they bask in their own pleasant thoughts. But Giorgione's dreams seem so real that we imagine he must have lived his life in them, and we have to wonder whether he ever woke up to eat his dinner or pay his bills. He died very young, at thirty-three, and we know very little indeed about the facts of his life.

But we now come to a greater painter about whom we know far more. We may

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begin with a story that is told of him as a boy.

It is spring in the Dolomites (döl'ō-mīt), those beautiful mountains to the north of Venice. The country is full of flowers. The boys and girls from the little village of Cadore (kā-dō'rā) are out on the hillsides gathering the flowers for a village festival. A little boy named Titian (tish'ān) has been out picking flowers with his sister, and now they are coming back to town with their arms full of blossoms. But as they enter the town the boy makes some hurried excuse and runs off to hide his flowers while his sister's eyes follow his vanishing figure in wonder.

Again and again the same thing happens. The sister knows that Titian is not taking his flowers where all the rest are going, but she keeps the puzzle to herself. Then, on the last evening before the festival, the boy comes to his sister with his eyes shining.

"Come and see what I have to show you!"

He leads the girl to a deserted shed on the edge of the village. On the stucco wall he proudly points to a picture—of the Virgin with her Child in her arms.

"O, Titian, how beautiful! But where did it come from?"

"I made it," answered the boy.

"You made it! But how? Where could you get the colors?"

"I made the colors, too. I made them out of the flowers. I just squeezed out the juices. And here is my Madonna—painted with flowers!"

In pride and joy Titian's sister ran for her father. Soon the whole village had come out

to see the work of art, and to wonder at the boy artist.

Whether or not this story is exactly true, it is certain that this boy Titian (1477-1576) showed such gifts for painting that he was sent to Venice for study, and before long was working in the studio of Giovanni Bellini—

where Giorgione was also at work, and where Titian too may have met the great Michelangelo. Titian and Giorgione grew to be great friends. Though a greater painter, Titian was never such a dreamer as Giorgione, and he must have envied his friend his visions. At any rate, he copied Giorgione's style so fully that when the two painted a picture together it is hard to tell which is which.

We can see this in a famous picture called "The Con-

cert," which the two painters probably did together. The dreamy, wistful face of the man at the claviers must be Giorgione's work, while the firm, strong hand of Titian must have painted the monk on the right.

After Giorgione's death, Titian carried on his golden style for another ten years; and all through his life he carried in his mind the mountain country where he and his friend had seen the light. In all his long life in Venice—and he lived to be nearly a hundred years old—Titian never put the canals and their boats into his pictures, but rather the Alpine scenery of his childhood.

Yet instead of being a dreamer, Titian was bent on practical success through his fine art. He was, indeed, fairly hard-headed about it, and he proved a good business man as well as an artist. He could paint very great pic-



Photo by the Louvre

In this portrait of "The Man with the Glove," by the great portrait painter, Titian, we see a young man of the world, handsome and elegant, sensitive and dreamy and proud.

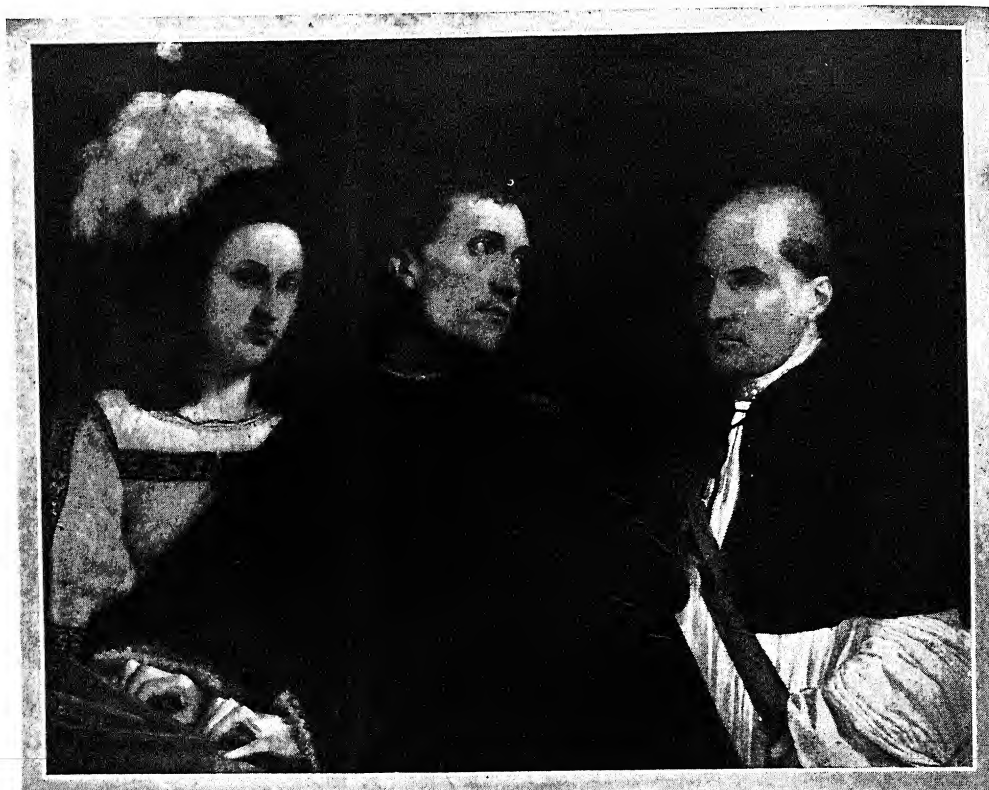


Photo by Alinari, Florence

"The Concert," which you see here, was probably painted by Titian and Giorgione together. It combines the firm, strong hand of the first artist with

the dreamy glow of the second. The sturdy monk to the right may be Titian's work, and the dreamy figure at the clavier may be Giorgione's.

tures with one eye on the money bags. He was very much a man of the world.

So in an early portrait such as "The Man with the Glove" we can see a glow that Titian had caught from Giorgione; and yet in the fine, firm painting of the head and splendid elegance of the whole we can see that this young man is a man of the world, just as Titian was himself.

Titian soon found out that the way to success as a portrait painter was to touch his people up just enough to give them a fine romantic air. He took care not to change them too much, for they wanted to look like themselves, and yet he made his portraits so flattering that people came flocking to him for their pictures. Who would not love to look like the Man with the Glove, or the splendid lady in blue velvet called "La Bella"?

Yet as Titian grew older he came to be less

patient with his sitters, and more searching in his study of them. We may see this in such a portrait as that of Pope Paul III. The old pope's figure is tense and uneasy, and his hands clutch the arms of his chair. There is tragedy in the air, and we hardly need to be told that Paul III died after his family had risen up against him. The family may have thought the picture a little too frank; at any rate it was never finished.

At the age of thirty-six Titian was very successful, but he was not yet satisfied. He asked the Council of Venice to make him the state painter, at a large salary. Old Giovanni Bellini held the office at the time, and of course he did not like his pupil's attempt to put him out of it. But after his death Titian came into the position, adding a fat salary to all his gains from his portraits.

It is even said that Titian was not above bargaining over the prices for his pictures.



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Photos by Anderson, Rome

Above is Titian's "Last Supper," a work which was cruelly cut down to fit into a certain space in a palace

in Spain. Yet it still shows how well the master could group his figures.



This is Titian's beautiful and famous painting which is commonly known as "Sacred and Human Love."

If a painting was for some duke or prince who could pay a large fee, the artist could make it very gorgeous with glowing silks and satins, but if it was for some humbler person he could make it cheaper, without wasting any more time than was necessary. He even struck up a strange friendship with a famous blackmailer named Aretino (ä'ră-tē'nō), who made money by threatening to spread scandal about people until they paid him to keep quiet. Yet this Aretino seems to have been a true friend of Titian's, and to have taught the painter how to flatter his royal patrons till they showered him with honors.

While striving for success in such ways, Titian also learned to paint in a majestic style that left all the dreams of Giorgione

far behind. This style may be seen, for instance, in the vast picture he painted for the church of the Frari (fră'rē). It was such a colossal affair that the monks of the church were worried about its huge figures. But the picture gained such praise from the people that the monks decided they must have it.

The same great style may be seen in the Madonna that Titian painted for the Pesaro (pă-să'rō) family. Two great columns loom up out of sight in the picture. The Madonna sits against one of them, while the saints stand or kneel on the steps below. The spectator has a sense of vast outdoor space, of splendid color, and of great dignity.

At times Titian could paint rather more



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informal pictures, such as his "Holy Family with the Rabbit." Here he can be familiar. He is in his beloved Alpine country, and he paints a beautiful Venetian girl with a rosy baby who reaches out in delight for the rabbit his mother holds. The picture shows Titian at his warmest and most friendly.

Instead of retiring in his grand old days, after his seventieth birthday, Titian went on developing new ideas of painting. He had been to Rome and seen Michelangelo's mighty work in the Sistine (sĭs'tēn) Chapel. As a result he seems to lose much of his old interest in gorgeous color, and to conjure up bolder and more somber pictures. We can see an example in the picture of his patron, the emperor Charles V. The horse and rider are painted against a sky that is dull after sunset. The Emperor sits firmly on the horse, but he is no brilliant imperial figure; he is a frail

old man, silent and thoughtful. The painter has left behind the bright days of his youth. Perhaps his hand is feebler and his eyes are growing dim. Certainly he is thinking more. And somehow this kind of picture is more impressive than splendid ones of the earlier days.

The splash and flare of light in the paintings of the aged Titian may start us talking of something very important in the history of art—not only in Italy, but in all the lands of Europe, and not only in painting, but in all the other arts as well. Beginning in the

last days of Titian, and going on for the best part of two centuries afterward, there is a gradual but vast change in the art of Europe. In brief, the change shows the slow decay and death of the great styles in art which were the pride of the Renaissance (rĕn'ĕ-sōNs'), that vast movement which is drawing toward an end in the later days of Titian; and it shows the gradual rise, in the place of those older ideals, of the new style or styles which we call Baroque (bā-rōk'), which was coming into use in the seventeenth century and ruled through most of the eighteenth.

There is something very firm about Renaissance art. The buildings are firm: they stand solidly, calmly, quietly. The pictures are firm too: the forms of Giotto and Masaccio and so many of their followers are similarly solid, clear, and simple. But as we get into Baroque art, we feel less calm and quietude. We

feel more movement in the art, more swing and bounce. In the painting we feel a flame of moving and flickering light that constantly leaps and falls and changes. If you will look long enough at some of the pictures we are going to mention and show on these pages, you will see just what these words mean. But here is another way of illustrating it:

When, in a thunderstorm, a bright flash of lightning suddenly flames over the country, the trees and houses and all other things will leap out of the darkness for an instant and then vanish back into it. Now have you



Photo by Alinari, Florence

This splendid lady in blue velvet is one of Titian's most successful portraits. People have called her "La Bella" because she is so beautiful.

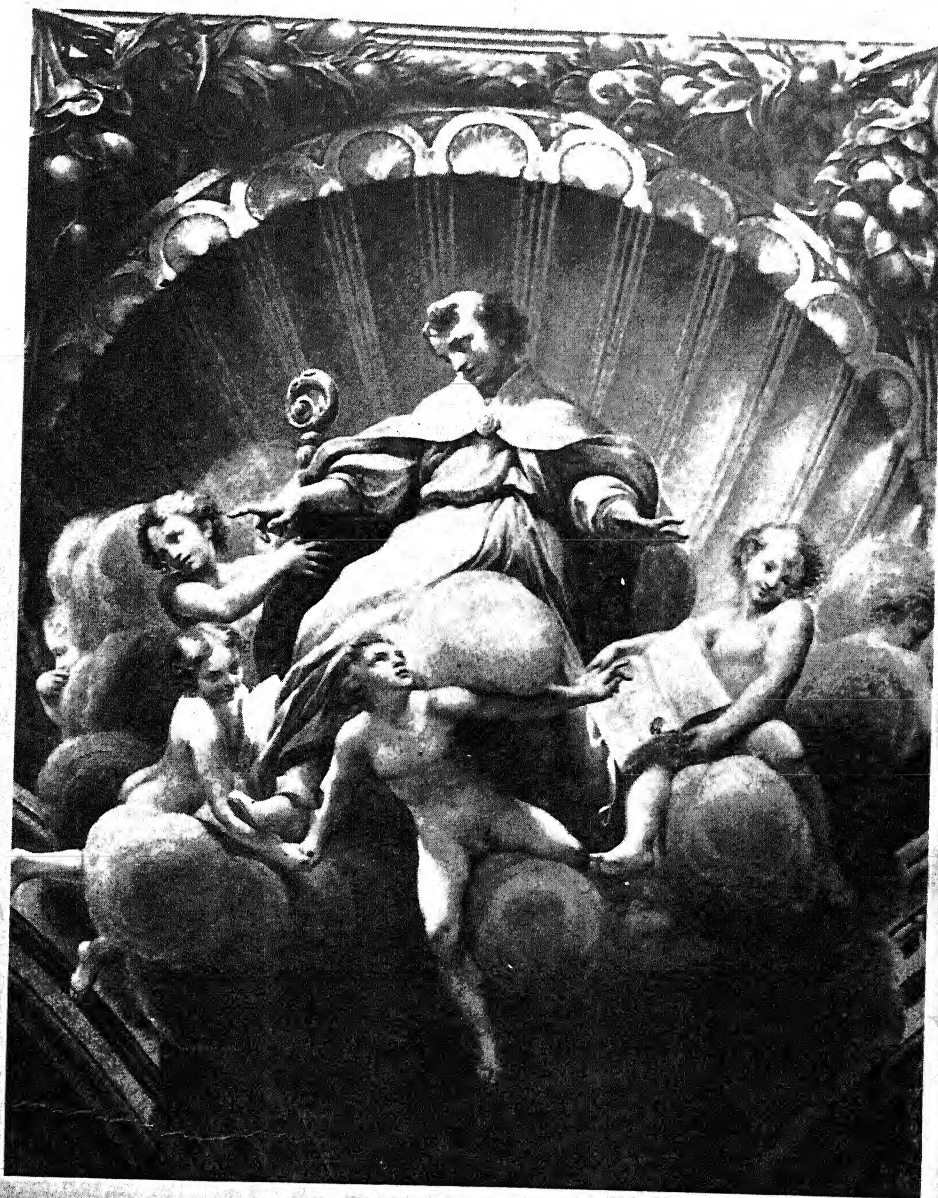


Photo by Anderson, Rome

It is hard to believe that in the picture above we are seeing part of the great dome of the cathedral of Parma. Correggio was a master at painting away

walls and ceilings; here, instead of a stone vault, we see saints and angels soaring up to heaven on the softest of billowing, pearly clouds.

ever watched them to see just what seems to happen? In the flash they leap and vanish so suddenly that they actually seem to move themselves. And it is this moving sense of light that fascinated the Baroque artists. This is not to say that they were especially

interested in thunderstorms, of course, though one of them made a great painting of such a storm, but that they were very much interested in all the things that light does; and that they saw this light not as a steady, constant glow, but as a changing



Photo by Alinari, Florence

In Tintoretto's painting of St. Mark freeing a slave from torture you may see how much Tintoretto loved to put bold movement, power, and impetuous energy into his pictures. His saint comes hurtling down from the sky with a suddenness that takes our breath away. The figure is too much of a "stunt" to be

thing forever playing over objects and making us look at them.

So the Baroque painters do a great deal with moving light. The style started in the south, where the sunlight is brightest, and to see the full effect of it we have to go to Italy or Spain. But it fascinated the artists in the north too, where it had a profound effect on such great men as Rubens (rōō'bēnz) and Rembrandt (rēm'brānt). In Rembrandt, to be sure, it is anything but a bouncing light, and Rembrandt gets many of his most marvelous effects with only a beam of light piercing the deep shadows of his pictures. But it is still the light that does the magic work. In the many lands where the Baroque style flourished it produced many different effects, but everywhere it produced something of the kind of motion in art that we have been trying to describe—motion that comes from the

truly artistic, but it does show a remarkable knowledge of perspective. Tintoretto is famous, too, for his handling of light and shade. The light falls in brilliant patches on parts of his figures; other parts are hidden in the deepest of shadows. It is partly this effect of light that makes the figures move.

flaring and falling and ever-changing light.

You can see a good beginning of all this in a famous picture called "The Marriage of Bacchus (băk'ūs) and Ariadne" (ăr'ī-ăd'nē). It was painted by the Venetian Tintoretto (tēn'tō-rēt'tō), whom we are going to discuss in a moment. In this picture the beautiful, swinging bodies may not really be so different in form from those of Michelangelo or Raphael (ră'fă-ēl); but it is the light which, so to speak, plays the music in the picture. It ripples over the bodies so warmly, and makes them seem to move! If you get far enough away from this picture, what do you think you will see? Hardly any bodies at all, but rather flashes of light flaring out of shadow. That is the spirit of Baroque.

Of course this new style did not come all in a moment. The older artists helped to start it—Michelangelo with his turbulent



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Photos by Anderson and Chauffourier

This painting of "Christ among the Doctors" is the work of Veronese, the last of the great Venetian

painters. Like the other Baroque artists, he was interested in striking light effects.



Bernini's David is an early work full of nervous energy and frowning determination.



This is Bernini's statue of "pious Aeneas" carrying his aged father from the ruins of Troy.



figures and Titian with his riot of color. In fact, the very man who did the Bacchus and Ariadne wrote these words on the wall of his studio: "The drawing of Michelangelo and the color of Titian."

At this point we must mention another great artist who had his share in the Baroque movement even though he lived and painted in a small city and never gained any great fame in his own lifetime. This was Antonio Allegri (ä-l-lä'-grē), commonly called Correggio (kôr-rēd'jō). He was born in 1494, and did his work at Parma.

Correggio cared very little for stately grandeur, but he had a great love for pretty things and for soft, light colors. Yet Parma is not very far from Padua and Mantua, where the art of Mantegna had come to be the model for all Northern Italy; and it is one of the oddities in art history that Correggio, the painter of pearly loveliness, should have learned his art from Mantegna, that stern lover of ancient Roman ways. Yet it was not the sharp lines of Mantegna that Correggio studied; it was Mantegna's trick of painting away walls and ceilings and leaving landscapes, trees and sky, in their places. In another story we have told how Mantegna painted a hole in a ceiling with people leaning down over the balustrade and looking at the spectator below. Now we may show what Correggio did with the same idea.

## Correggio's Wonderful Dome at Parma

The cathedral of Parma has a dome. On the outside it looks solid enough, but when you step inside the church and look up you have a great surprise. Instead of a round

stone vault above, you find you are looking straight up into heaven! You see billowing white clouds and soaring angels and saints; and far above, just ascending out of sight, you behold the Virgin going up into heaven. The picture almost takes your breath away. Yet the good people in Parma were not at all

sure they liked it when Correggio

had finished it. There were so many flying feet and legs in the ascent! The people were not quite sure whether to pay Correggio for the work, and they

appealed to Titian in Venice. But Titian knew great art when he saw it.

"It is a miracle," he said. "If you turned your dome upside down and filled it with gold coins, you would not be paying too much."

Correggio painted many other pictures, including some very beautiful Madonnas. There is one called "The Holy Night" in which the Virgin and the Child are very rosy and lifelike, and in which a glow of light around the Child illuminates the entire

picture. But Correggio died at the age of forty, and not until after his death did the world begin to take note of his work. Then his lovely Madonnas, his rosy coloring, and his billowing clouds grew very popular in an age that was getting a little tired of what was grand and stately.

And now we may go back again to Venice. We go there to meet a "thunderbolt" among painters—that dyer's son whose name was Jacopo Robusti (jä-kō'pō rô-bōōs'tē), but whom we always call Tintoretto, a name which means "the little dyer."

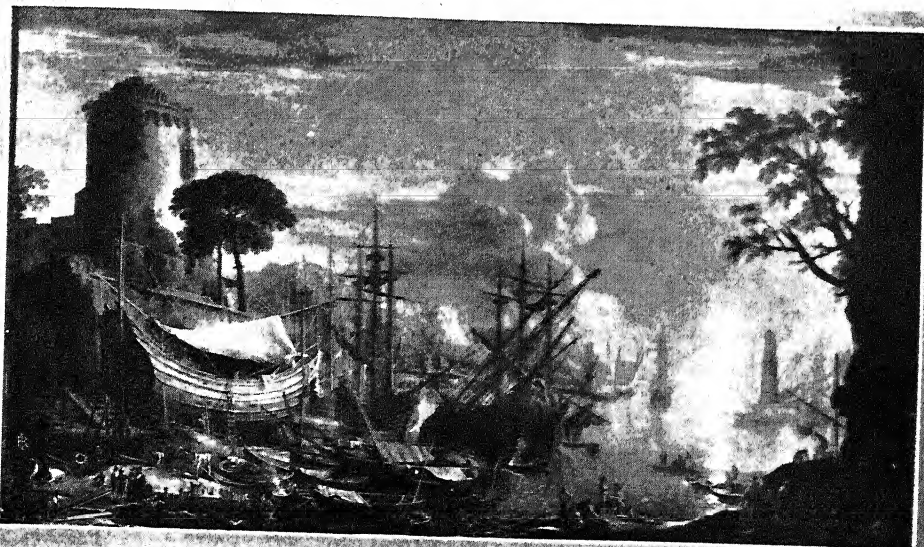
Born in 1518, Tintoretto was sent at the age of seventeen to study in the studio of Titian. But he was not to remain there.



Photo by Chauffourier, Rome

This painting of Christ is by Guido Reni (1575-1642), a famous artist of Italy who is somewhat less admired to-day than formerly.

## THE HISTORY OF ART



Photos by Alinari and Anderson

Salvator Rosa (1615-1673) was an Italian painter of the school of Naples. He was fond of painting romantic landscapes such as sea caves, desolate beaches, and rugged mountains. He was by no means a great

artist, but he was at least original, for not many had chosen to paint that sort of landscape before. His scenes are often haunting and majestic. Above is his painting of a harbor scene.



It is hard to recognize the rugged giant of the Bible in Guido Reni's "Samson" above.



Caravaggio, who painted "The Lute Player," above, is noted for his murky shadows.

One day, as Titian was walking through the studio, he saw some of Tintoretto's sketches lying on the floor. He went purple in the face, and very soon he sent Tintoretto an order never to enter that studio again.

Now Titian was known for a jealous man,

and some people said he was afraid to have such a gifted pupil as Tintoretto in his shop. But it may be that Titian was simply horrified by the sketches he had seen. For Tintoretto never did things in the way people had done them before. The man was a sort

of whirlwind, and certainly the sketches from his hand that have come down to us are very vigorous splashes of color with hardly any drawing at all. The older artists, and many of the most modern ones, make a very careful drawing of their pictures on the canvas before they ever think of putting on a drop of paint. But Tintoretto was like some of the moderns in making no drawing at all, but simply splashing on his colors. In a word, he painted in color and not in outlines. And even if Titian himself did a little of that in his last days, he may very well have thought his young pupil was simply going to the dogs.

Once out of the studio, Tintoretto mainly taught himself. One of his first works of art was the painting of the walls of his own parish church. Here he made, among other pictures, one of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. In this we see the young maiden being brought up to the temple to study with the high priest. She looks like a very little girl indeed as she climbs the great flight of steps all alone. Two mothers point her out to their own little daughters, and far down at the left an old man reaches up as if he saw a vision of what was to come.

Already Tintoretto is different from the painters who had gone before him. He is painting excited people, people who are in sudden motion on account of some strong impulse. Yet his pictures are by no means

restless, for he knows how to give them a proper balance.

In 1560 the Brotherhood of St. Rocco (rōk'kō) decided to decorate their school and invited a number of artists to compete. For the competition each artist was to submit a sketch of St. Rocco in glory. When the time came all the other artists brought in their sketches, but Tintoretto submitted a picture all completed.

There was much complaint. "This man is too sure of himself," said the other artists. "He thinks he is so much better than the rest of us that he has gone ahead and finished his picture without waiting for the judges."

Tintoretto asked everybody's pardon. He had not meant to seem proud. He simply did not make full-size sketches. His way was just to go ahead and paint—and he would be the only loser if his finished picture was not chosen to ornament the church.

### The Genius of Tintoretto

Of course the picture was chosen, for none of the other artists could rival Tintoretto. Aside from his mere skill in painting, they did not have his bouyancy, his great sweep of energy—those qualities that he passed on to the best of the Baroque painters who followed him.

One of the paintings for the school of St. Rocco was that of the Crucifixion. If we place it beside the Crucifixion by Man-

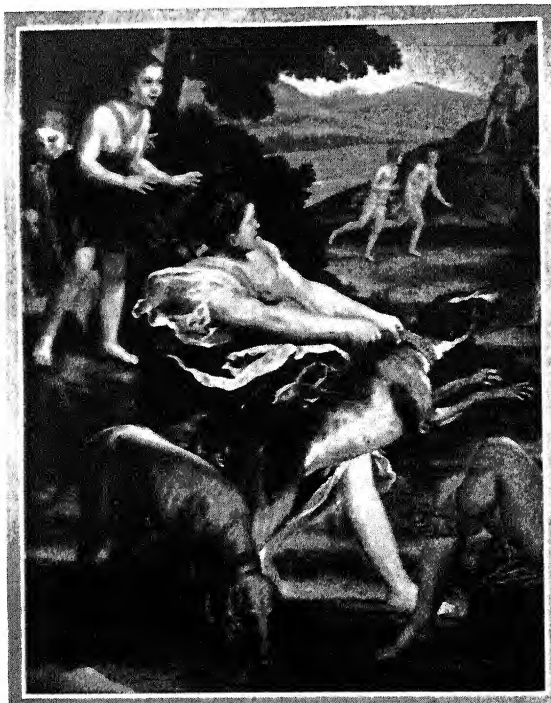


Photo by Anderson, Rome

Domenichino (1581-1641) was a contemporary of Guido Reni, and these two artists of Bologna studied together under the same master. Domenichino's (dō-mén'i-kē'nō) "Diana Hunting," which you see above, shows that he was clever with his brush and could paint rich draperies and fine effects of light and shade. People of the eighteenth century admired him tremendously, but to-day we find him commonplace and without much to say.





Photo by Alinari, Florence

St. Theresa had many visions. Sometimes she was tortured by a sharp pain that ran through her side and she fancied that an angel with a burning spear came to her and pierced her heart. Spanish painters

are fond of showing this scene. Above, you see how the Italian sculptor Bernini carved it in stone. The clouds on which the saint swoons and the heavenly rays that fall upon her are all of stone.



tegna, we may see an illustration of all we have been saying about Tintoretto. The picture by Mantegna is frozen into a terrible stillness. That of Tintoretto is a host of struggling figures against a lurid sky. There is a crowd in the background, and a huddled group of friends in front of the cross—which is the only still thing in the picture. And you know that Tintoretto was asking of himself, "What was it really like on that day of terror?" After him the painters were constantly asking that same question when they painted the crucifixion.

At about the age of seventy he received a commission for a vast painting of Paradise. During the three years he worked at it there was a slender figure with him on the scaffolding, gaily chatting with him and running errands for him. It was his little daughter Marietta, dressed as a boy to make it easier for her to run up and down the ladders all day. The great painting was just completed when Marietta died, leaving the old painter to live on for three lonely years before he followed her. His painting of Paradise was probably his last picture.

Tintoretto did not leave the artists in Venice very much to say. He seemed to have spoken the final words. After him came Paolo Caliari (1528-1588), the painter whom we always call Veronese (vā-rō-nā'sā) because he came from Verona. He is the last of the great Venetians, and he is mainly known as a painter of vast pictures showing gorgeous feasts and celebrations in the high life of Venetian palaces. There are greater pictures than this, but no others that give a better idea of the splendor of Venetian life in his time.

The great sculptor of the Baroque style in Italy was Giovanni Bernini (1598-1680). Bernini (bēr-nē'nē) did not love the hard

and solid qualities of stone as Michelangelo had loved them. Instead he wanted to make picturesque things out of stone, in the way of the other Baroque sculptors. When he carved "The Vision of St. Theresa," for instance, he made stone clouds for St. Theresa to swoon upon, and threw a glory of stone rays about her. Michelangelo would surely

have been horrified at such things, and yet the work is very human and picturesque, and it made a strong appeal to the people of the seventeenth century.

We know Bernini largely for his celebrated fountains in Rome—those many carven fountains full of big, twisting figures and leaping dolphins that spout pure water and seem to keep the city cool through the heated months. They are the biggest fountains you will ever see, whole cascades of exuberant Baroque artwork.

We have now come near to the end of Italian glory in the arts of old. From now on Italy will not do much more than give her glorious past to others—to a Greek who studies in Naples and Venice and then goes on to Spain, to build up an art there; to a handsome young man from Flanders who comes to live in Italy and study Titian, and then returns to be the glory of Flemish painting; to a Frenchman who comes and lives over again the forgotten splendors of old Rome; to a Spaniard who comes to study Titian and Tintoretto, and goes back to become one of the greatest of all portrait painters. All these men we shall meet when we come to tell the stories of art in their own lands, and we shall then see how Italy was their teacher.

For Italy has indeed been "mother of arts and men," and the bright light that shone in her days of splendor will shed long rays through many a century to come.



Photo by Chaffourier

This head is another of Guido Reni's theatrical pictures of grief. They helped set a style in religious painting. But if you will compare this face with the face of the sorrowing Virgin in certain of the other pictures we have shown, you will see how much more impressive is the restrained grief portrayed by some of the greater masters.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 15

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### THE GREAT PAINTERS OF OLD FLANDERS

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- Why Hubert van Eyck was the best-loved painter of his day, 11-194  
His brother John, a marvelous workman who put in every wrinkle, 11-195  
How Michelangelo criticized the Flemish painters, 11-196  
How the great city of Bruges arose, 11-197  
How the van Eycks invented clear oil glazes which made their paintings last, 11-199  
The widely traveled van der Weyden was the official painter of Brussels, 11-200  
Quentin Massys, a blacksmith who became famous for his portraits, 11-202  
How Peter Breughel returned Flemish art to homely subjects and simple people, 11-202

#### *Things to Think About*

- Who was the first painter of a picture which might be called a song of the beauty of the world in which we live?  
What was the result in Flanders of the feeling that painting was a craft like carpentry or any other?  
What happened when the Italian style was widely imitated in Antwerp?  
Why was Peter Breughel an important figure?

#### *Related Material*

- History of Flanders, 6-346-50  
The bloody struggle between the Catholics and Protestants, 11-217  
The Flemings were great weavers, 12-142, 159  
The invention of printing meant much to Flanders, 10-48  
The Renaissance in architecture, 11-481-93  
The Inquisition in the Netherlands, 6-328  
Erasmus, a great Renaissance thinker, 13-82-83

#### *Practical Applications*

- The homely subjects, painstaking workmanship, simplicity, and sweetness of the early Flemish painters still please us to-day.

#### *Summary Statement*

- The earlier Flemish painters were marked by a genius distinctly their own. It had its roots in their daily lives, and though corrupted for a time by outside influences, it produced one of the finest schools of art of all times.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

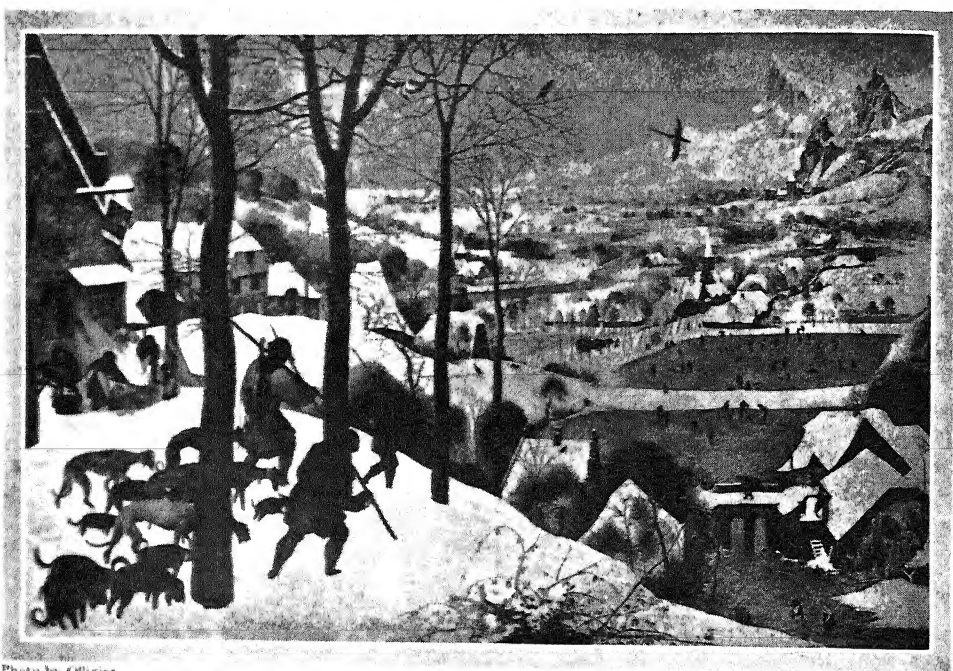


Photo by Olivier

This beautiful winter scene was painted by Breughel, and is often called "February." It is one of a series

of five "Months," each one showing in faithful detail one of Breughel's charming landscapes.

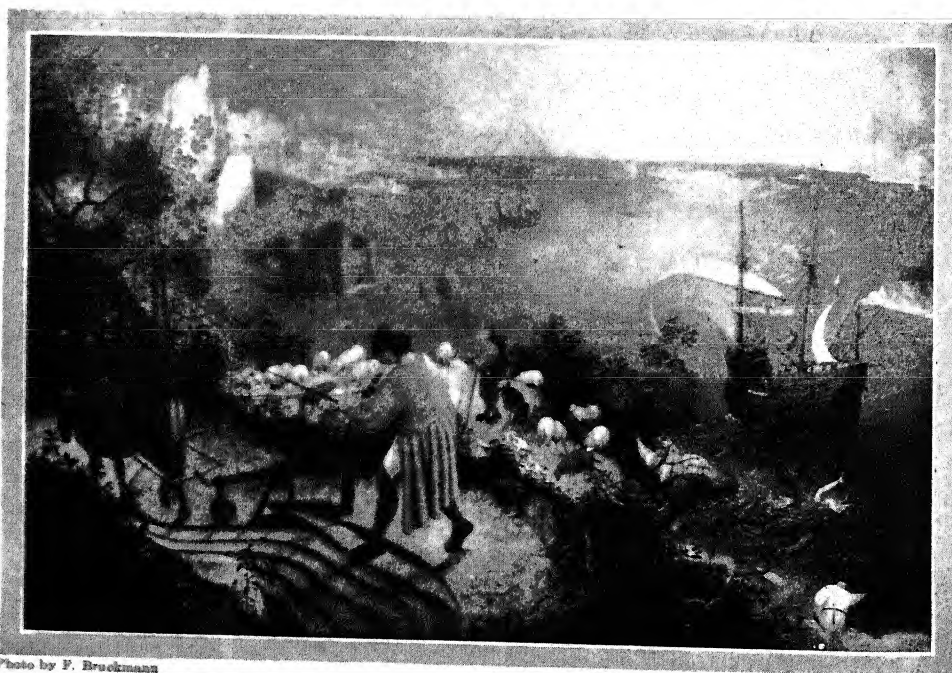


Photo by F. Bruckmann

These two paintings by Breughel are about the earliest pure landscape that we have. The lower picture is

part of "The Fall of Icarus," but one must search a long time to find the unlucky boy.



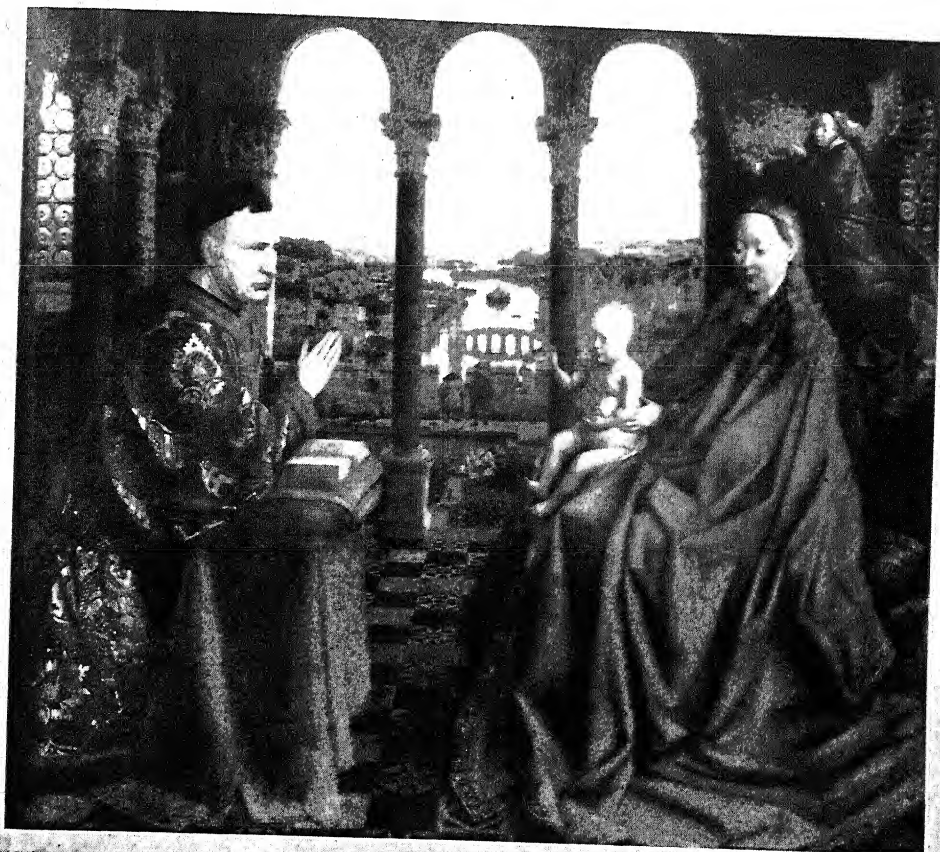


Photo by the Louvre

"The Madonna of Chancellor Rollin," as this picture is called, will tell us a good deal about old Flemish art. It is by John van Eyck, one of two brothers whose work is the greatest glory of the school. The lovely Madonna, crowned by an angel, shows us how deeply religious this art was. Then if we look at the face of the Chancellor Rollin we shall see how real a portrait van Eyck could make; and the exquisite

details of the columns and robes and the dainty Flemish landscape beyond show us how beautifully the old Flemings set down what they saw. But we must not be surprised to see the Virgin set in a fifteenth century Flemish background opposite a man living when the picture was painted. For it is only rather recently that it has occurred to some painters that they ought to be historically accurate in their pictures.

## The GREAT PAINTERS of OLD FLANDERS

*How the Genius of the North Worked Out Its Own Ideas of Truth and Beauty in Fine Art*

**I**N ITS earlier stages the rise of modern painting is almost wholly an Italian story, and we have already given many a page to the growth of the fine arts in Italy. But if Italy led, some of the other lands were not slow to follow; and we must next tell of one small country in the north which was soon giving birth to a

line of painters who have remained famous down to our day. That is the country of Flanders.

In another story we have said something about a certain John, duke of Berry, who, for a man of his day, owned a great many books. Two of his books, especially, tell us a good deal about the difference between the



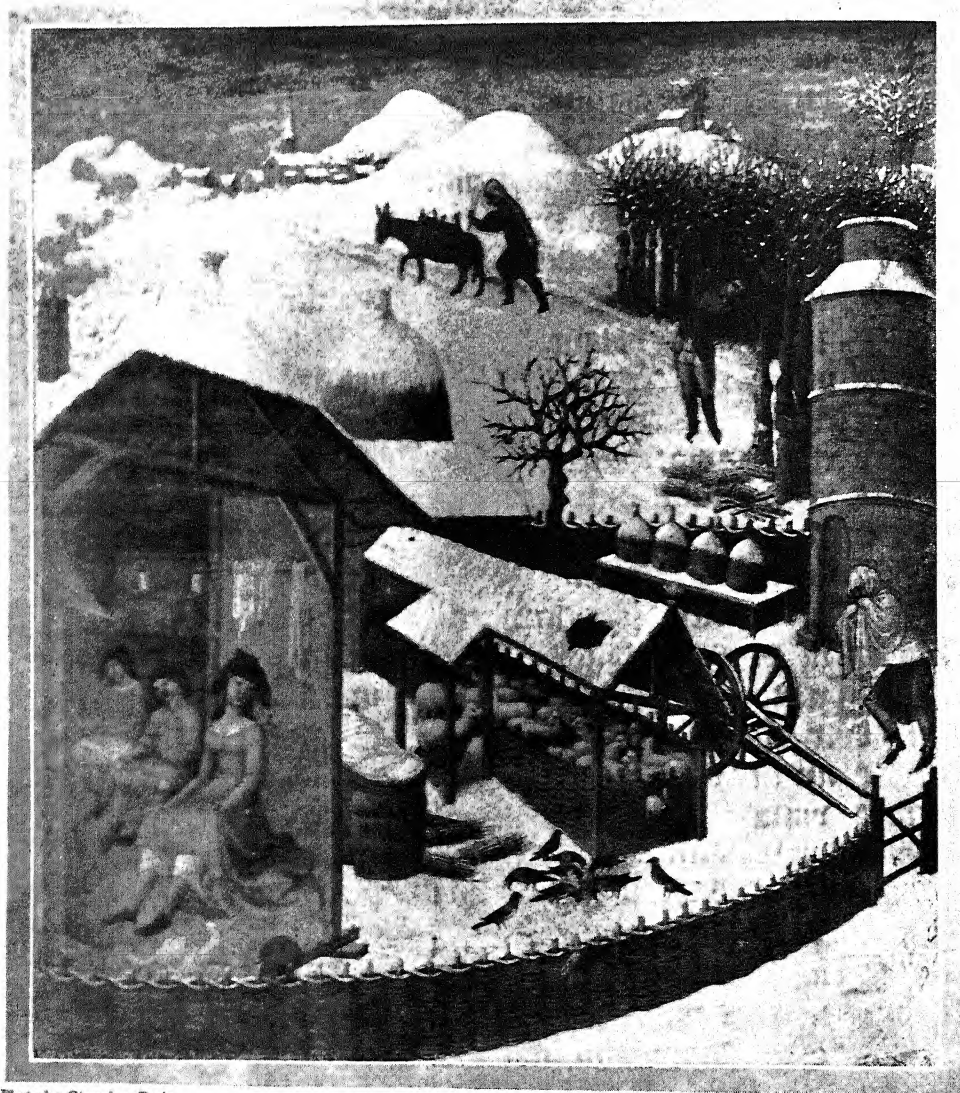


Photo by Giraudon, Paris

Here is the picture of "February" from "The Very Rich Hours of the Duke of Berry." It was painted by one of the Limburg brothers, and shows that as

early as about 1400 the artists of Flanders were beginning to look lovingly at all the little homely details around them, and to set down what they saw.

art of the north and the art of the south. One of the books is called "The Very Rich Hours of the Duke of Berry," while the other is "The Very Beautiful Hours of Our Lady." Both the books have remarkable pictures painted in them.

Now if you were wondering about all the differences between Flanders and Italy, perhaps the very first one that would come into your mind would be the cold winters in the

northern land. And in the first of these books this very thing appears at once. A picture of February is possibly the most notable of all its pictures in the way it shows all the little details of winter until it almost makes you shiver. The people in one corner of the picture are sitting with their feet close to the fire, and a woman who has to go outdoors has thrown a warm shawl over her head. The sheep are huddling together to

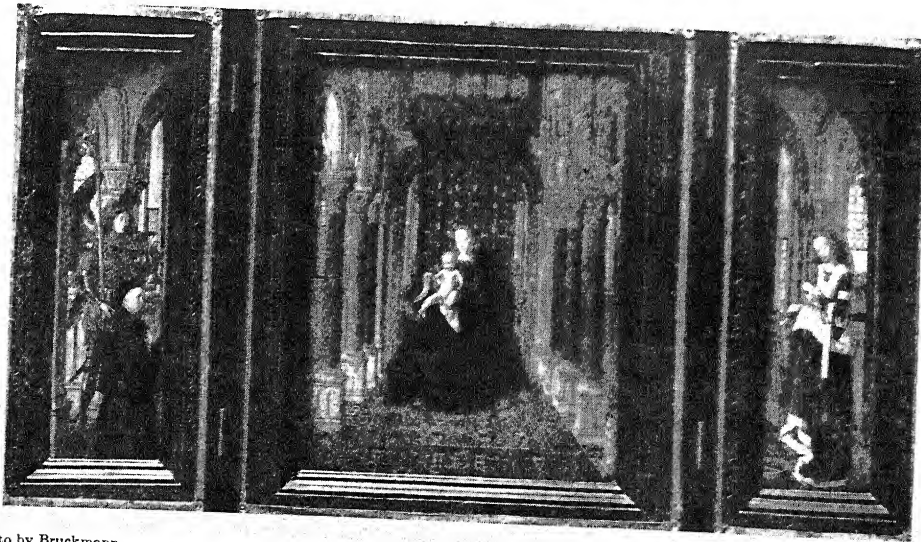


Photo by Bruckmann

This is a small altarpiece by John van Eyck; the wings on the sides are hinged, as you see, so that the whole could be made to stand upright. The old painters made many of these "triptychs" (trip'tik). In this one we see some of van Eyck's most exquisitely fin-

ished work. In the center sit the Virgin and Child enthroned, at the right is St. Catherine, and at the left St. Michael, with a kneeling man who probably paid for the painting. Nothing could be more gracious than the faces and attitudes of these holy personages.

keep warm, and many another detail tells how keen the wintry blasts feel. This picture was made about the year 1400.

## Painters Who Saw the Beauty of Nature

Of course it took more than winter to make Flemish painters, and the climate in their land is not all wintry. They had their summer too, and they seem to have loved it all the more for the winter that was gone. The Italians may have taken the sunshine for granted just because they had so much of it. The Flemish may have prized it more because they had so much less. At any rate it is in the north that a man first painted a picture which may be called a song of the beauty of the world in which we live, its sunshine, its outdoor air, its gay flowers.

For his other book the Duke of Berry did not care so much, possibly because it was unfinished. At any rate he sold it, and it did not grow famous until it had left his hands. It came into those of his nephew, Duke William of Bavaria, who was also count of Holland. The new owner called for an artist to finish the pictures in the book, and that artist did some remarkable work.

When you see some very beautiful view

of hill and valley, you may feel that it need not be so very hard to paint the view on canvas. But when you try to put it down on the flat canvas, you find the view doing very odd things. Everything in it is the same distance away. Everything crowds right up in front, and you have a hard time making any hill or tree stay off in the background, miles away, where it belongs. This was a hard problem for all the early painters, and we have told how some of the Italians struggled to solve it—how Uccello (ōōt-chēl'lo), for one, spent years of work on it, drawing all sorts of diagrams and calling mathematics to his aid until people thought the man had gone mad.

## Painters of the Flemish Countryside

The Flemings went at the problem in a different way. Instead of sitting in a studio and puzzling out how a thing ought to look, they went out and used their eyes until they saw how it did look. Then they painted what they saw—often with a marvelous truth to fact.

What they saw was not a very thrilling country. There were no high mountains or deep valleys in their land of Flanders, no

hilltops with little towns resting on them in sharp outline against a clear sky. There was little enough romantic scenery. All the same, there was a gentle country, with wide rivers flowing quietly through fertile fields. The slopes were not so steep and the air was a good deal more misty, but the flowers blossomed easily and when the sun did shine it was very precious.

Duke William's painter loved the sun. When he made a picture of the Baptism of Christ, he showed how softly the slanting sunlight falls in a late afternoon, and how it is reflected from a peaceful river. In our day we are familiar with pictures in which the sun lights up a path across the water, but in 1416 no one had thought of painting that ordinary sight. The first great Flemish painter put it in his picture because he loved it.

He made a picture of sunset too. It comes in his painting of Judas betraying Christ. The scene is at dusk, and the towers of the city are outlined against a fading sky, while the lanterns and torches of the men make blotches of light.

#### The Joyous Work of Hubert van Eyck

We have not given the name of this painter yet. We are not quite sure who he was. But because he did such wonderful work, most people think he must have been the greatest and best-loved of the Flemish painters in the fifteenth century—Hubert

van Eyck (vān ik'). It seems unlikely that anyone else could have made these pictures, and from what we know of Hubert it seems probable that they are from his hand. What we do know of him comes largely from one

great picture in a Flemish church.

It is a dark church, the cathedral in Ghent (gĕnt). But one of its chapels is illuminated as with a light from heaven. In that chapel is Hubert van Eyck's painting of St. John's Vision of Paradise. Against a pale blue sky tinged with the light of early morning rise the distant bluish mountains, and in front of these the towers and spires of the new Jerusalem. Then there is a ridge of darker hills and a lawn of richest green dotted with Flemish flowers—violets, lilies, daisies, cowslips. In the center is the white lamb on a white altar, with angels in white kneeling around;

and on either side are the spotless saints who may appear before the throne of God. They troop over the little hills in bright blue and red, yellow and green. Above all, on a throne, sits the Creator of the world.

No words can describe the rich color of this great painting. It is almost as if we had never seen color before, for the Italians had never risen to the brilliance of this coloring. And the color is very joyous; indeed, the whole picture is one of the most joyous in the history of painting. In every gentle, earnest face shines the glad faith of Hubert



Photo by Hanfstaengl, Munich

Here is one of John van Eyck's marvelously realistic portraits. It is supposed to be a picture of Cardinal della Croce (dĕl'lä krō'chā), though there is some question as to whether it is really he. For us it does not in the least matter what the man's name was. The thing that interests us is the way the great portrait painter has put in every detail of expression, every lump and wrinkle, until his subject seems very human indeed. This was John van Eyck's peculiar genius—the thing in which he differed from his idealistic brother Hubert and from all the Italians.



## THE HISTORY OF ART

van Eyck, who must have loved God's earth and God's people very dearly.

When Hubert van Eyck painted "The Three Marys at the Tomb," he caught all the wistful sorrow of the devoted women who came to the sepulcher only to find the Master gone. The scene is very early morning; the light is just beginning to creep over the hills, while the city of Jerusalem looms in the distance.

Hubert also made a picture of the Virgin with her Child in her arms, standing in a Gothic church. Since the church is only a fanciful frame for the Virgin, we need not trouble if she is so tall that she could almost reach the ceiling with her hand. The interesting thing in the picture is the sunlight that filters through the window and makes a patch on the floor.

What Italian had thought of painting sunlight as early as 1420? Up in Venice, Giovanni Bellini (jō-vān'nē bēl-lē'nē) was not even born yet. These were the early days of Masaccio (mā-sāt'-chō) and Fra Angelico (frā ān-jēl'ē-kō) in Florence. And far north in Flanders was Hubert van Eyck, a lonely genius finding new ways to put his dreams into color.

### The Realistic Art of John van Eyck

Hubert van Eyck had a younger brother John, whom he taught and who worked with him. John was also a remarkable painter, but he was no dreamer like his brother. He painted exactly what he saw, with the most

astonishing accuracy. In spite of all the difference between the brothers, however, we cannot always tell whose work is whose. The great painting in the Ghent cathedral was Hubert's design and mainly Hubert's work, though John helped with it and completed it after Hubert's death in 1426.

How much John gained from his brother and how much is due to his own genius may be hard to say. Such a picture as the one called "The Madonna of Chancellor Rollin," by John, is surely one of the loveliest of paintings. The grave Virgin wears a great cloak of the most glowing red, while Chancellor Rollin is clad in sumptuous brown and gold cut velvet. His face is a marvel of workmanship. Every tiny wrinkle is put in, and yet the result is no mere collection of lines, but a very vivid countenance. The beautiful round arches in the picture frame a lovely view of a



Photo by the National Gallery

This is the famous portrait of John Arnolfini and his wife, by John van Eyck; it is the one which bears the words "John van Eyck was here." These people are a little stiff and not especially beautiful, just as they doubtless were in real life. Yet it is hard to believe that in "real life" they were any more real than van Eyck has made them here!

little bridge, a river, and a town, with bluish distant mountains.

There is a famous portrait by John van Eyck of John Arnolfini (ār'nōl-fē'nē) and his wife. As we look at it, we almost feel we are inside the room with the two people. In his strange hat that swallows up so much of his face, the man looks like a typical merchant as he stands by his prim, sedate wife in her rich fur-lined dress. Everything is put into the picture exactly as it looked—the little dog, the shoes, the chandelier, even the mirror on the wall, reflecting the whole scene.



Under the chandelier are written the words "John van Eyck was here." And he certainly was. When that old house was torn down, not so very long ago, a room was found with his very window in it. There was a ring in the ceiling to hold the chandelier, though of course the chandelier was gone. We could replace it from the picture.

John van Eyck painted precisely what he saw, little or big, for little things were just as interesting to him as big ones.

A man like Michelangelo (mī'kēl-ān'jē-lō) could never understand such an art. Here is what he said of Flemish painting:

"It will please the women, especially the very young and the very old ones. It will also please friars and nuns, as well as some of the nobles who have no true eye for harmony.

"The painting is of cloths and bricks and mortar; of the grass in the fields, the shadows of trees, and bridges and rivers, which they call landscapes; as well as of little figures here and there. And all this, though it may seem good to some eyes, is in truth done without taste or art.

"I do not speak in this way about Flemish painting because I think it is all bad, but because it tries to do too many things at once—each of which would be enough for a great work—so that it does not do anything really well."

#### An Art for Plain People

If we remember what heroes Michelangelo carved and painted, we can understand how he would not love an art that made so much of plain people and of the small details in their lives. The art of Flanders was largely

an art for plain people. Great frescoes did not last very well on the walls there. The damp air mildewed them, and smaller pictures on wooden panels wore better. The great picture at Ghent is an exception, and even that is made up of a number of panels.

"It tries to do too many things at once."

The Flemish people loved all the little things of life. A very plain folk, they took an honest delight in their fine goods and in gay colors, and they wanted their pictures to tell all about their enjoyable life. By sheer force of watching long and lovingly, their painters solved most of the problems that had worried the Italians; and they learned to use their paints so perfectly that the pictures they made remain unaltered to our day, five hundred years later.

Painting was a craft in Flanders very much like carpentry or any other craft. A man learned to draw under strict rules, and even after he became a licensed painter and a member of the guild, he was by no means allowed to buy and use whatever paints he liked. The guild decided what colors he could use and the amount of them he could buy.

Only the court painters were exempt from these strict rules. They were responsible solely to the prince or duke who employed them. The van Eyck brothers were court painters, working together for Duke William of Bavaria. We have a picture which they made of him as he came back to Holland from England, where he had been for some time after the great battle of Agincourt (ā'zhāN'kōōr'). His daughter is going out to meet him, and the sun, though half hidden



Photo by Bruckmann

There are several fine paintings by Memling in St. John's Hospital at Bruges, among them the small altarpiece of which this is a part; it is called the Floreins Altar after the treasurer of the brotherhood, who ordered it. In our picture St. John the Baptist is painted with the lamb which was his symbol in art. We notice the delicate Flemish landscape and the fine drawing of the face and figure of the saint; Memling was also a notable portrait painter.

## THE HISTORY OF ART

One of the finest of Roger van der Weyden's masterpieces is this "Descent from the Cross." All these early painters, as you have noticed long ago, always chose religious subjects unless they were painting portraits. Many a great picture is still in the cathedral for which it was painted.



In this picture van der Weyden has not given us a landscape background, as the Flemings so often did, but has drawn all our eyes and thoughts to the sorrowful people at their tragic task. All the light centers on the drooping body of the dead Christ, all the lines of the pattern lead to it.



behind the clouds, is sparkling on the water.

Later in life John van Eyck was in the service of Philip the Good of Burgundy, who took the rule of Flanders in 1425. Besides painting for this duke, John seems to have served him as an ambassador as well. The Duke was looking for a wife, and he was also eager for an alliance with Portugal. So he sent John down to Portugal to paint a portrait of the Princess Isabella. From the portrait the ruler might decide more easily whether to marry the lady. Of course he may have told John van Eyck to make some notes about the disposition of the princess; though frankly he would hardly need to do that, since a van Eyck portrait can tell nearly everything there is to say about a person. John van Eyck was never known to flatter one of his sitters, nor does he ever seem to leave out any important trait of character.

Isabella seems to have stood the test, for John was again sent down to marry the lady by proxy and to bring her home to his duke.

The van Eyck brothers were the makers

of Flemish painting, though they were not born in what we now call Flanders. They came from the neat town of Maastricht (mäs'trikt) in Holland. Another of the early Flemish painters, Hans Memling, was a German by birth, and still another came from the Walloon (wō-lōn') country, a district in what is now Southern Belgium—it is French in speech and manners. But all of these in the early days were in the Flemish city of Bruges (brūzh).

### When Bruges Was a Great City

In that day Bruges was one of the great cities of Europe. The center of the woolen industry which made the wealth of Flanders, it had a fine harbor full of ships from all over the world. The Flemish weavers made cloth for a large part of Europe, and they grew rich from the industry. In Bruges was the court of the Counts of Holland, and the town saw plenty of gaiety and high living. When Philip the Fair, king of France, made a triumphal entry into Bruges, the splendor in the dresses of the townsmen's wives



Photo by Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Could anything be more charming than this "St. Luke Making a Portrait of the Virgin," by van der Weyden?

The faces of Mary and Luke are like loving portraits; the dainty landscape might be by the van Eycks.

was enough to make his queen jealous.

What the Queen envied was just what the Flemish townsmen wanted to see in pictures, and the van Eyck brothers faithfully worked out an art which would keep the fine clothes of the citizens bright and glorious long after

their wearers had vanished and been forgotten.

The van Eycks are often called the inventors of oil painting. Yet they did not paint in oil as we do to-day. They painted in tempera (tēm'pā-rā), like the Italians;



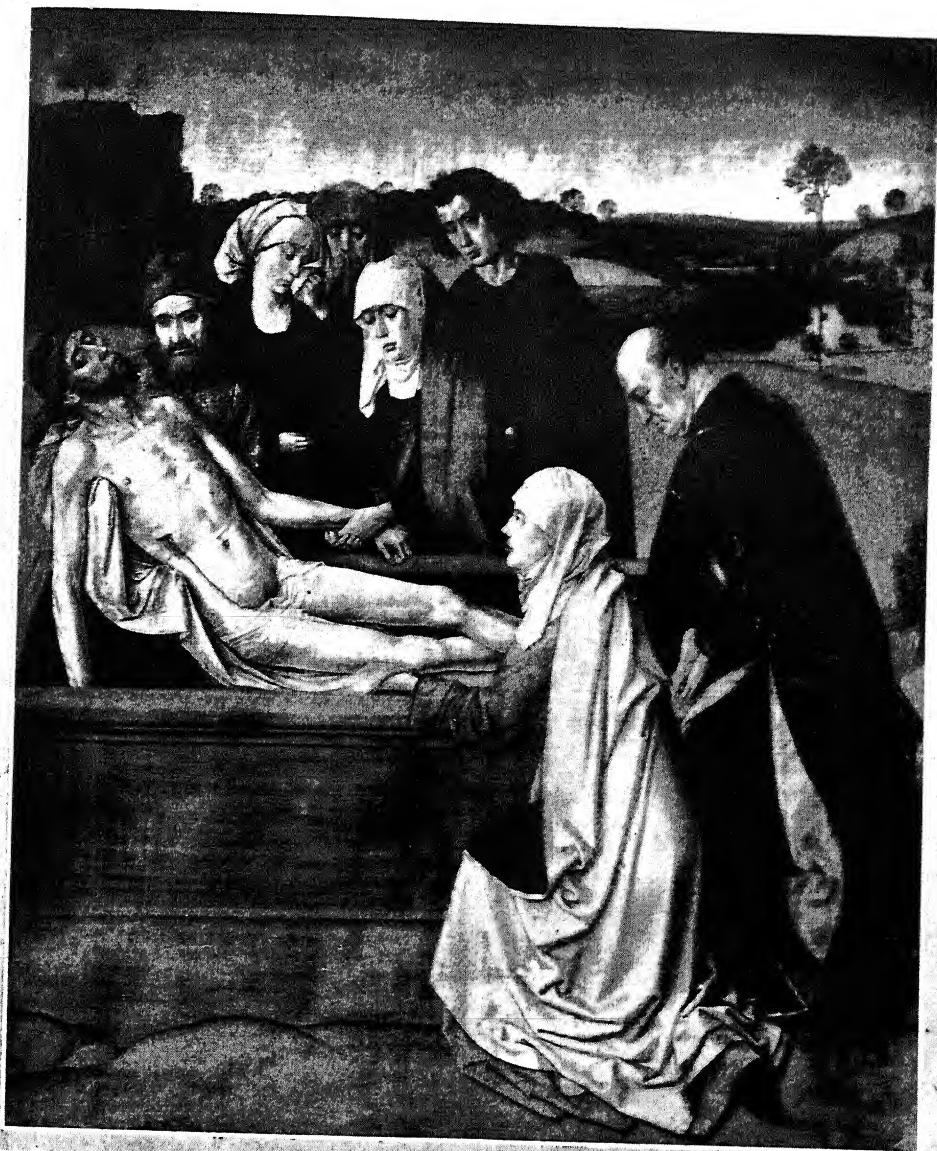


Photo by the National Gallery

Dirck Bouts (1415-1472) was from Haarlem, and therefore by birth a Hollander, but he counts as a Fleming, for he settled in Louvain and learned his art from the van Eycks and van der Weyden. In this picture

of "The Entombment" we notice that the people are rather tall and thin and that there is a sort of angular stiffness, not at all unpleasing, about their attitudes. These things are part of Bouts's style.

but they covered their pictures with layers of clear oil glazes which "locked up" the colors away from the damp air so well that the paints have never lost their brilliance.

The Italians were much impressed with the skill of these Flemish painters. The

Duke of Milan sent a painter up to Bruges to study with the celebrated Roger van der Weyden (vân dêr vi'dên). To this day we have a letter written to van der Weyden by the Duchess of Milan on May 7, 1463. The Duchess thanks van der Weyden for teach-



ing her painter his secrets of putting on colors. Possibly it was from this painter that the Flemish use of oil glazes came down into Italy to be employed by Leonardo and by the Venetians.

Roger van der Weyden (1400-1464) was born at Tournai (tōw'r'nē'), in the French part of Flanders. There is a certain French grace and elegance in his character and in his work. When he paints a portrait of a lady, for instance, he can make a very pretty pattern of her headdress and can paint the white cloth so that we may see through it to her forehead underneath.

Roger took a journey down to Spain to work for King John of Castile (kās-tēl'). Here he left one of his greatest paintings, "The Descent from the Cross." There is no landscape in this picture, such as was so common with the Flemish

painters; there is only a flat background with large figures looming up against it. The figures are very tense and their grief is pitiful indeed; yet the sorrowing people are formed into a beautiful pattern which reminds us of the pretty patterns in the books of the Gothic days in France.

#### The Official Painter of Brussels

Roger also went to Italy, being one of a long line of Flemish painters to travel in that land. He learned a good deal from the Italians and taught them a good deal in

turn. He seems to have especially admired the Umbrian painter Gentile da Fabriano (jēn-tē'lā dā fā-brē-ā'nō). Roger's picture of "The Adoration of the Magi" shows the influence of Gentile in its gay procession. Roger painted also for the Medici (mēd'ē-chē) family in Florence. He was there in

the days of old Cosimo (kō'zē-mō), called the "father of his country," when Andrea del Castagno (än-drā'ä dēl kās-tān'yō) and Paolo Uccello were so busy in their studies of perspective.

Roger van der Weyden was a very popular painter. The city of Brussels passed a law making him its official painter, and when he came back from Italy he opened a studio in Brussels to which many other painters came to study. Among these were a Dutchman named Dirck Bouts, who put beautiful landscapes into his pictures, and the

German Hans Memling (1430-1494), whom we look upon as a Flemish painter because he lived all of his life in Flanders.

The talent of Memling is well shown in his picture of the Marriage of St. Catherine. In this picture a beautiful piece of velvet hangs behind the throne of the Virgin and a rich carpet lies under her feet. On one side St. Catherine is holding out her hand for the Christ Child to place a ring on her finger. The old story of St. Catherine, who was an Egyptian princess, tells us that her father wanted her to marry a certain prince,



Photo by Bruckmann

This beautiful young girl is Mary Magdalene as painted by Quentin Massys. Doubtless the jar she carries held the rich ointment with which she anointed the feet of Christ. The picture shows very well how beautifully Massys could combine the grace of Italian forms with the Flemish background.

woven into tapestry pictures by the clever Flemish workmen. These artists in tapestry could not help noticing that the Italian drawings were very different from those of their own land—grander, more stately, and with larger figures. Then Roger van der Weyden brought some of the Italian style when he came back from the south, and the Flemish artists began to grow rather discontented with their own homely paintings. They suddenly decided that the genial landscape of their country was too dull and flat, and that they would like it to look more Italian. The greater painters, like Roger van der Weyden, were wise enough not to try to be too Italian, but when a small host of lesser painters went trooping down into Italy the result was rather different. It was often a good deal like a grocer's lady trying to play the part of a queen.

#### A Blacksmith Who Became an Artist

The best of these painters was Quentin Massys (1466-1530), who fell in love with the marvelous soft effects of the Italian masters. So he has left us, among many other things, a portrait of a young girl painted so delicately that we can almost feel the softness of her cheek and of her silky hair. But however lovely the young girl may be, she is still very different from any Italian.

Quentin Massys (mä'sis') was born in Louvain (loo'vāN') and started life as a blacksmith, but never was a man less fitted for that trade. Massys was meant to be a fine gentleman, and an eager student of the arts—music especially, as well as painting.

So in 1491 we find him enrolled in the painters' guild of Antwerp. Here he grew up a famous painter, as well as a musician, a poet, and a friend of such a man as the great scholar Erasmus (ê-rāz'mūs) and the famous painters Holbein (höl'bīn) and Buer-  
ra, who came visiting from Germany.

More than once Massys painted a portrait of Erasmus. His portraits of his friends are among the best things that he did. When you look at his portrait of Peter Gillis, a friend of Erasmus, you cannot help feeling that the man has just finished speaking and that his face is still bright with the

animation of his words. In the madonnas of Massys we have a good example of one way in which the Flemish artists were trying to imitate the Italians.

#### When the Hapsburgs Ruled Flanders

About this time the land of Flanders passed out of French hands into those of the Hapsburg kings who ruled in Austria and Spain. The Hapsburgs also furnished emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, and their sway stretched into England and Germany, as well as over Austria, Spain, and Flanders.

The court of the emperor Charles V, in the sixteenth century, was famous for its art and its artists. The Emperor had the great Titian (tish'an) in his train and he also employed the Flemish portrait painter, Anthony More. This artist later worked in Spain for King Philip II, as did also a strange Dutchman named Jerome Bosch (bōsh). In the work of Bosch we see human faces twisted into the weirdest of shapes, sometimes amusing and sometimes horrible. Bosch seems to have felt that men were a rather queer race of apes and to have painted them just that way.

Flanders came into her own again with Peter Breughel (brū'Kēl). Breughel clung to the homely subjects which have always belonged to Flemish art. His work is all devoted to his dear homeland and its simple people. Usually he sees these people as a hearty folk, a little coarse perhaps, but getting a good time out of life. He loved the peasants especially, and he used to go to peasant festivals where he could watch the people at their dancing and merrymaking. That is the way he painted them.

#### A Picture of the Fate of Icarus

There is an old Greek story telling how Daedalus (dēd'ā-lūs) and his son Icarus (ik'ā-rūs) escaped from the prison of King Minos (mī'nōs) on the island of Crete. Daedalus made two wonderful pairs of wings which he stuck with wax on his own shoulders and on the shoulders of his son; then the two prisoners flew up into the air and away. The father of Icarus had warned the boy not to fly too near the sun for fear that the heat might melt the wax and loosen the wings,



Angels and awestruck shepherds have gathered to worship the newborn Christ, and into their faces Hugo

van der Goes has put the solemn emotion that this deeply religious Flemish painter put into all his pictures.

but Icarus was so delighted that he struck out with great sweeps of his wings, and the first thing he knew he was too close to the sun. Off came the wings, and down fell Icarus—down into the sea and to his death.

It is a dramatic story, but how do you think Breughel painted it? On one side he puts a headland with trees and a house and a peasant looking out. Then there is a great expanse of rolling hills and valleys, and over on the other side there is the sea. In the other corner there appears just one leg—and this is all you see of Icarus as he vanishes into the water. Now what does this mean? It means that the story of Icarus was not at all what fascinated Breughel as it might have fascinated many an early Italian painter. It was the Flemish country that Breughel wanted to paint, and the tale of

Icarus was just an excuse to put in hills and valley and sea.

We began our story of Flemish painting with a calendar—with the picture of February in the Duke of Berry's book. We may end this first great epic of Flemish painting with another calendar—a calendar that Breughel himself made. Anyone who looks at his picture of November in that calendar will see how northern the Flemish painters still are and how much they have learned since the days of the Duke of Berry. The sturdy backs of the cows are marvelously painted in this picture. The landscape may be a little more mountainous than is usual in Flanders, but the picture is full of the glow of late autumn and gives a strong feeling of the real outdoors. It is full of the homely vigor in these northern painters.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit

No. 16

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### MASTER ARTISTS OF OLD GERMANY

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

German painting began quietly about the middle of the 15th century, 11-205

Why German engravers and wood cutters were kept busy, 11-206

Dürer, a goldsmith's boy, becomes a master even by Italian standards, 11-207

Why he has most to say in his engravings, which are still unsurpassed, 11-212

Dürer never really emerged from

the Middle Ages, 11-212

Why Holbein was a man of the Renaissance and the most splendid of German painters, 11-212

How he became the famous painter of King Henry the Eighth and the court in England, 11-214

Why Dürer and Holbein left no successors worthy of them, 11-214

#### *Things to Think About*

What was the effect on German artists of the invention of printing?

For what peculiar abilities was Dürer admired in Italy?

What, in turn, did he take from the Italians?

From what studies and travels did Holbein get his ease and polish?

How did he get his solidity and remarkable strength?

Why was Holbein popular as a court painter?

#### *Related Material*

How printing and engraving were advanced by the Germans, 10-48

German history, poetry, and legends of the Middle Ages, 6-204-14

The famed German philosophers, 6-228

Maps of Germany, 6-474

Germany excels in music, 12-210-19

The Germans built great castles, 10-361

Martin Luther, a religious rebel who founded a new faith, 13-540-43

#### *Practical Applications*

Dürer and Holbein could give us lessons, even to-day, in seeing

sharply and putting down with great care exactly what we see.

#### *Summary Statement*

The German painters, though lacking the Italian sense for pure beauty and singing colors, nevertheless produced masterpieces of

drawing and portraiture. The engravings of Dürer and the portraits of Holbein occupy a high place in the history of art.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*





Photo by Bruckmann

This charming picture of "The Garden of Paradise" was painted by some artist in the Rhine country about 1420. The "school" of painting which arose in Germany about this time is on the whole international—that is, it painted the sort of pictures people were

painting pretty much all over Europe. Yet already we notice the loving care with which our German artist has painted the dainty flowers. Going through a gallery of German paintings, you are almost sure to notice how many German artists have loved growing things.

## MASTER ARTISTS of OLD GERMANY

*This Will Be Mainly the Story of the Genius of Dürer and Holbein, the Greatest German Painters*

**T**HIS is a story of the rise of fine art in the land of Germany, of the way the Germans learned to be great painters. In art, of course, there are really no national boundaries; there is nothing to keep an idea or a style hidden away in a single country. To be sure, Italy was long supreme in the centuries when modern art was beginning. And we have already told a good many stories about the rise of Italian art. But we have also told how fine art spread to Flanders, and now we are going to tell about its beginnings in other northern lands. We shall take Germany first.

German painting starts quietly about the beginning of the fifteenth century, and for some time there are no great names to mention. In the days when Hubert van Eyck (văn ik') was painting his great vision of heaven, at Ghent, the Germans around Cologne were having their dreams of heaven too, and were beginning to put them into pictures. They loved to think of Paradise as a garden of flowers, and to paint pictures of the Virgin and the saints sitting in such a garden. In one such picture made about 1420, there is a pretty walled garden in which the Virgin is sitting by a table reading a book,

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while St. Cecilia is teaching the Christ Child to play on her lute. This picture has a great deal of the grace and charm which had become international by the time of its painting. It is like a dream of heaven.

In the south of Germany, near Switzerland, the painters had a good many beautiful lakes to look at, and they seemed to feel that their own country was lovelier than any dream. From this district we get a good many pictures showing the beauty of the local landscape—such as one in which Jesus is directing the fishermen to cast their nets into a quiet and lovely mountain lake.

In the second half of the fifteenth century the artists in Germany fell so deeply in love with the work of the Flemish painters that nearly all of them went to Flanders to study. During this period a great deal of German art is a very close imitation of Flemish work.

Yet there is something German about the art in spite of all foreign influences. When the old Romans built up their vast empire they conquered the lands which are now France and England, but they never fully managed to subdue the fierce German tribes. In a land like France some of the ancient culture lingered on through the centuries, and it was only natural for the French in any period to look down toward Italy for inspiration in the arts.

But Germany had little or no memory of that ancient culture. She had struggled up-

ward in her dark forests, and for a long time had kept a part of her barbarian spirit. The Germans liked hardy action and loud laughter and even sharp, tortured grief. It was a good while before they learned to love the graceful flow of color in painting such as we see in Italy, and stately elegance came rather late among their artists.

Some of their best art was made out of the very wood in their forests, for the Germans early became marvelous wood carvers. Not only were they very skillful in making wooden pictures with wooden blocks, but they carved their wood into fine statues; and behind the altars of their churches they set up great screens of wood all carved into myriads of little scenes and gaily painted and gilded. Any true German artist was very likely to have this kind of skill.

Such an artist, for instance, was Martin Schongauer

(1445-1491). He could draw a perfect maze of little lines and shape them deftly into the image of dense forests. He excelled in engraving—that is, in drawing a picture with a sharp instrument on a smooth copper plate. The lines drawn in the copper are filled with ink, and the plate is then pressed on a piece of paper until the ink is sucked out of the lines and leaves the drawing on the paper. The art of the woodcut, also a favorite in Germany, is a similar process with a block of wood; except that in this case the lines may also be raised on the wood



Photo by Bruckmann

Stephan Lochner, who painted this "Madonna in the Rose Arbor," settled in Cologne in 1442 and became the chief glory of the Cologne school of artists. One look at this picture will tell us why he is famous for his tenderness and charm. He was heir to a group of medieval painters who tried to put into their art the gentle, mystic spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.

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by cutting away the rest of the design.

Both of these processes involve printing, which can be done over and over again from the same plate on new pieces of paper. As soon as someone thought of printing the letters of the alphabet in this same way—in other words, as seen as the printing press was invented—the number of books to be had grew by leaps and bounds. This meant a sudden call for artists to make pictures for all the new books, and the German engravers and woodcutters were kept very busy.

Martin Schongauer (shōn'gou'-ēr) lived to see the beginning of printed books. A famous man, he was known even down in Italy as a master draftsman. As a boy the great Michelangelo (mī'-kēl-ān'jē-lō) was set to copying a drawing by Martin Schongauer. It is said that he copied it so well as to make his own master jealous of him.

Mathias Grünewald (grün'ē-vālt) was another true German artist and one of the few at this time who had an eye for color. His pictures are full of the extraordinary vigor

and violence of action which the old Germans loved. But at this time the great Venetian school of painting was at its height

to the south, and Southern Germany in her dealings with Venice could not help hearing of the brilliance of the great Venetian masters. This fact brings us now to speak of one of the greatest German artists of that time, who was indeed one of the great artists of all time. We mean Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528).

The ancient city of Nuremberg (nū'rēm-bürg) is one of the most beautiful and picturesque places in the world. Rising along its river and near its old bridges, there are many quaint houses with sharp, steep roofs and with wonderful carvings over their fronts. It is a very old town indeed, and it speaks to us to-day, straight out of the Middle Ages, of the Gothic art of the north.

In one of these carven houses lived Albrecht Dürer (āl'brēkt dü'rēr). Born a goldsmith's boy, he early showed that he had unusual gifts. "My father took great delight in me," he writes, "and seeing that I was eager to learn and to work, he put me to school until I could read and write; then he brought me home again and taught me the goldsmith's trade."

But even in his childhood Dürer had notions of being something more than a goldsmith. He wanted to be an artist. At the



Photo by Bruckmann

Mathias Grünewald, who painted this very dramatic picture of "The Resurrection," was an artist who could get the most amazingly beautiful effects by his use of color and light. His most famous paintings, done in the early 1500's, are in the great Isenheim Altar now in a museum at Colmar, in Alsace; "The Resurrection" is one wing of that altarpiece. It is his masterpiece of light. See how Christ has risen from the tomb in a great burst of light, like a mighty vision born of the light. The soldiers fall back stunned into the shadows. The colors in the original painting are tremendous—Christ's robe is flame-color and yellow, but purple in the shadows and an unearthly blue where it trails back into the tomb. The heavenly light back of the figure is yellow at the center, shading into rose and rimmed with soft blues and greens.



age of thirteen he was already making sketches of himself in a mirror, and the sketches that are still left to us show that he was a very good-looking boy. The eyes may seem to stare a little too much, but that is because it is hard to draw your own eyes from a mirror. Their expression is strange.

A boy who was so clever at drawing would be very likely to become an engraver in those days when the new books from the printing press were calling for so many illustrators; so the young Dürer was apprenticed to an engraver, and the very finest work he ever did was in the black and white of engravings and woodcuts. Yet he certainly thought of painting in colors as a more splendid thing than engraving in black and white. He had plenty of chances in Nuremberg to hear about the glorious work which the painters were doing down in Italy, for in spite of its ancient Gothic

character, his town was one of the free imperial cities, having a thriving commerce and many a distinguished visitor. The charming and gifted Dürer must have wished to be like the famous Italian painters of whom he heard so much. So he set out to seek his fortune in travel through Germany, and a little later down into Italy.

#### Dürer's Marriage

Coming back to Nuremberg again in 1504, Dürer married Agnes Frey, a good German housewife who does not seem to have cared much for art or to have been a very fit mate for her famous husband. We have a good

many stories of how she scolded him, though they may not all be true. At any rate Dürer hardly ever mentions her in his letters, and he usually left her at home when he went gaily off on his travels into the realms of art. It certainly was his art in which he mainly lived. It seems to have filled his life.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

Dürer's pictures of the Holy Family, such as this "Madonna and Child with St. Anne," always have a fine, solid quality which is very German. In his most characteristically German pictures, the background is all filled with flowers and castles and forests and other delightful details. Even when, as in this picture, he groups his people gracefully against a blank background more in the Italian manner, no one could possibly doubt that the people themselves are German.

His next trip, very soon after marriage, took him down into Italy, where there was so much for him to learn. The full Italian influence, however, does not appear in his work as yet. After this short trip to Italy he settled down to work in Nuremberg, busily painting and engraving, and coming rapidly into great fame. In one of his early pictures of the Nativity we may see the kind of work, still almost wholly German, that he was doing at this time. Mary and Joseph are kneeling in what looks like a whole forest of complicated ruins. Through the arches little figures are peeping, and at the bottom, like little dolls, kneel the members of the German family who paid for the picture and who therefore wanted to have a place in it!

After ten years Dürer heard that a famous Italian engraver was making copies of his engravings and selling them as his own. He set out for Italy at once, and stayed for the best part of two years. In many ways it was a very important trip for him. He had much to learn in Italy, and also much to teach.

He now found Italy a land of dreams. "How I shall freeze back at home," he wrote, "after this sunshine!" And in addition to



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Here is a page of portraits by Albrecht Dürer. First we have his earliest self-portrait, made in 1484, when, as he himself wrote, "I was still only a child."



This good citizen, with his look of whimsical alertness, is Heronymus Holzschuher, city councillor of Nuremberg.



This is another self-portrait—Dürer made many of them. The Latin means: "I, Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg, have painted myself in colors in my twenty-eighth year."



Dürer made many other portraits and studies both of important people and of ordinary folk about him. One of them is this "Portrait of a Young Woman."



Photo by Bruckmann

Here are the two famous paintings of apostles. In them Dürer tried to combine the flowing design he had learned to admire in Italy with his own native strength. At the left is John, in a magnificent red

robe and green tunic, and with him Peter, holding his enormous key. At the right are Paul, with dark beard and flashing eyes, and Mark, dressed in a great, green-white robe and armed with holy book and sword.

the sunshine, the gay life of Venice and the gay colors of her painters fascinated him. The splendor of the south made him feel rustic and out of place. What a world of art he had entered! Michelangelo was at work in Florence, and Raphael (ră'fă-ël) was com-

ing into fame; old Giovanni Bellini (jō-vān'nē bēl-lē'nē) was still the grand old man of Venice, though Titian (tish'ān) had already tasted glory. There has never been a greater period in painting.

Yet Dürer was at home among these great

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men, and they could love him and admire him. Bellini was amazed at the way the man could paint hair, and he begged for the brush that could paint such fine lines. Dürer simply picked up a handful of ordinary brushes.

"Take your choice," he said generously.

"But no," insisted Bellini; "I mean the brush with which you can draw several hairs at one stroke."

Dürer took one of the common brushes and drew some very long, wavy tresses. Bellini watched his lines in wonder and later said that if he had not seen it with his own eyes he could never have believed such painting to be possible.

On his own part Dürer loved and admired the grace of the Italian painting, its color and harmony and stateliness. He made a trip to Mantua to visit Mantegna (män-tān'yä), whom he admired as painter and en-

graver, only to find that Mantegna had just died. He exchanged sketches with the young Raphael, and he was invited by the city of Venice to make his home there. But he turned north into Germany at last, with his head full of Italian dreams. In much of his further work we can see how he is trying to put parts of those dreams into pictures—to paint more simply and gracefully, without so many little lines as he had used before.

The next dozen years were a very busy time, as indeed was the whole of Dürer's life. Aside from all other work, he was taken into the employ of the emperor Maximilian,

where he painted portraits of the ruler and his court. Here he saw a great deal of other fine work being done, such as the statue of King Arthur in armor that was made for Maximilian's tomb. Dürer himself did a little carving, but was mainly busy at painting and engraving at this time.

Then the Emperor died, in 1519, and Dürer made a trip to Flanders to ask the new ruler for a renewal of his pension. Here he was received with high honors. He visited the Flemish painter Quentin Massys (mä'sēs'), and in Holland made a friend of the great scholar Erasmus (ē-rāz'mūs). He even went out to Zeeland to see a dead whale that had been hauled up on the shore; for like so many men of his day, Dürer loved to pry into all sorts of secrets in this interesting world.

Back in Nuremberg once more, the artist set to work on what was possibly his last piece

of art. He presented it to the city with a modest and patriotic letter. It is called "The Four Apostles," and gives us pictures of John, Peter, Paul, and Mark. In this picture the heads are drawn with great strength, with the rugged power that Dürer always gives to his people, even to his women; but in the figures he has tried to copy the graceful sweep of drapery and color which he admired in Italian painting and which he always found so hard to manage. But fine as the painting is, it is stronger than it is graceful. It has more of the strong up and down lines of the old German Gothic



Photo by Bruckmann

The portrait of Martin Luther shown above is only one of the portraits of Protestant leaders Cranach made. He also did religious pictures from a Protestant point of view, after he himself became a Protestant. And he was a printer as well as a painter; Luther often made use of his press.



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than of the beautiful curves of the Italians of his own day. After all, Dürer was still in large part a man of the Middle Ages.

But it is in his marvelous engravings that Dürer has the most to say to us. It is these for which he is most famous, and still unsurpassed. No greater pictures were ever drawn in copper than

such things as this artist's "Melancholy," his "St. Jerome in His Study," and many other engravings. We can look at these pictures for a very long time before we see all that Dürer has put into them, and we can come back to them time and again to find them ever fresh and full of suggestion. As we look at St. Jerome in his homely, cluttered room, with his friendly lion asleep like a watch dog and with the sunlight filtering through the round panes and making patterns on the walls, as we wonder at the marvelously fine lines in which the whole thing is drawn, we are looking at what is truly a miracle of fine art.

We must pass over the work of Lucas Cranach (1472-1553), a very popular and distinguished painter and engraver. Cranach (krä'näK) was a personal friend of Martin Luther and has left us, among many other works, a portrait of Luther himself. We shall need all our space, in the rest of this story, to speak of the second great artist of Germany. That is Hans Holbein (1497-1543).

If you will look at any typical work of Holbein (höl'bin)—his portrait of Christina of Denmark will do very well—you will see

at once what it is that separates this painter from his great predecessor, Dürer. As we said, Dürer never wholly emerged from the Middle Ages. But as you notice the shimmering black robe of Christina, her round, sweet face, and her delicate white hands, as you look upon the aristocratic grace and

elegance of the whole picture, you know that Holbein was a man of the Renaissance (rën'ě-sôNs').

Holbein was born in Augsburg, then the most Italian of the German cities. His father was a painter before him, a disciple of the Italians and especially of Giovanni Bellini. The son inherited and deepened all these interests. He grew up to be a court painter. He lacked the intensity and rugged strength of Dürer, but he had a remarkably observing eye, great ease

and polish in his art, a fine sense of tact, and a wide knowledge of the world. The most splendid of the German painters, Holbein is the one who comes nearest in style to the great Italians.

### Holbein's Famous Portrait of Erasmus

As a young artist, Holbein traveled about Germany for a time and then settled for a while at Basel (bä'zěl). There he knew the great Erasmus, and, having taken up engraving at this period, he gained some commissions to illustrate the books that Erasmus was then publishing. His famous portrait of Erasmus, done at the age of twenty-seven, is one of the finest pieces of work he ever did. If you will look at the keen eye and the sharp



Photo by Chauffeurier, Rome

Here is Henry VIII himself, whose heavy, imperious face and enormous bulk are so familiar to us because of Holbein's genius. The hearty, honest strength of Holbein's art made him the perfect portraitist for those strong and lively times.



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Photo by Chauffourier, Rome

This is a page of Holbein's portraits done in England. Above is one of his great portraits of Sir Thomas More.



Holbein painted several of Henry VIII's many wives. This is the third of them, gentle Jane Seymour, mother of the boy who later became Edward VI.



Photo by Bruckmann

Holbein also painted many notables of Henry VIII's court. This is the strong face of John Chambre, the King's chief physician, who did much for English medicine.



Photo by Hanfstaengl

Robert Cheseman, whose portrait is above, was King Henry's falconer. That is why Holbein has painted him with one of his hunting falcons perched upon his wrist.

nose of the man in this picture, and at the mouth that is just a trifle scornful, you will have a fairly clear view into the mind of the great scholar and critic whom it represents. The portrait was painted for the famous Sir Thomas More in England, friend of Erasmus and of many other important men all over Europe.

### The Famous Painter of Henry VIII

Holbein did various other pieces of fine work at Basel. There is a beautiful Madonna, for instance, painted for the Meyer family of that city. But the period in which these pictures were done was a very troublous time in many parts of Europe, with the king of France at war with the emperor and with religious strife raging nearly everywhere. So in 1526 Holbein was glad to receive from Erasmus a letter of introduction to his friend Sir Thomas More in England. He set out for London, and the fact is important for us: a good deal that we know about Henry VIII and the men around him is told us by the faces of those men as Holbein has put those faces down in his portraits. For he saw them very clearly.

Not at once did he become a court painter in England. On the contrary, he nearly got into trouble by being a friend of Sir Thomas More. For a short time he went back to Basel. Sir Thomas later lost his head for standing out against Henry VIII, and to have been a friend of Sir Thomas was no way into the graces of the King. But Holbein found another road to the court. Through some of the German merchants in London he began to gain commissions from certain of the lesser nobles.

In this way he made his fine portrait of Robert Cheseman, the King's falconer. What

distinction he has given to the man! There are few heavy shadows in the picture; the figure is built of flat color, and of the finest and most delicate lines; and yet it has a remarkable solidity. The plumage of the bird in the picture is a masterly piece of work.

Portraits like that soon brought Holbein into great favor and honor, and by 1536 he gained the title of court painter to Henry VIII. He painted the heavy, headstrong face of the King, and the faces of many of the court ladies and the ambassadors. We can get acquainted with many of the people of that day from the mere sketches in red chalk that Holbein made of them. In that time kings and princes were not always patient enough to sit for hours while the painter did his work. Holbein might have only a short time to dash off a sketch of his royal or noble patron, and might have to finish the portrait from the sketch and from memory.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

Holbein painted this portrait of Margaret Wyatt, Lady Lee, sister to Thomas Wyatt, the poet who, with the help of the Earl of Surrey, introduced the sonnet into England from Italy. In early years Wyatt had been the lover of pretty Anne Boleyn.

When Henry VIII was searching Europe for a marriageable princess to be his fourth wife, he sent Holbein to Brussels to paint a picture of one prospective bride. This was Christina of Denmark, who escaped Henry and married the Duke of Milan instead. He also painted a great picture of Anne of Cleves, Henry's fourth wife. He made several other trips to the Continent, painting busily there and in England until his death of the plague in 1543. Few men have ever had a keener eye for human features, and few have taken greater care in putting them into pictures.

With Holbein's death, the first great period of German painting comes to a close. Dürer and Holbein, like the great Spanish painters of their time, had no successors worthy of them.

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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 17

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### THE MASTER PAINTERS AMONG THE FLEMISH

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

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|--|---|
| How Rubens brought the Baroque style from Italy, 11-156                        | 224   |
| Why Rubens paintings by Rubens are numerous in the galleries of Europe, 11-157 | Anthony Van Dyck was Rubens's best pupil, 11-227                    |
| How he became an ambassador as well as a court painter, 11-158                 | Why Van Dyck's highly refined work appealed to the English, 11-228  |
| His joyous athletic painting brought him a flood of orders, 11-161             | How he painted in a hurry, and what it did to his portraits, 11-228 |
| How he filled a palace with paintings for Marie de Medici, 11-                 | How English art came under a cloud, 11-228                          |

#### *Things to Think About*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| What prevented Rubens from becoming a mere imitator of the Italians? | slender, aristocratic figures have to do with his success?      |
| How did Rubens manage his famous workshop and pupils?                | Why was Rubens a greater master than the much admired Van Dyck? |
| What did Van Dyck's love of  |   |

#### *Related Material*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| The reign and execution of Charles I of England, 6-62              | queen regent of France, 6-180   |
| How Charles V of France ruled the Flemings, 6-174                  | Shakespeare and the Age of Queen Elizabeth, 13-153-61                 |
| How Philip II of Spain sent his Armada against the English, 12-397 | The great Dutch East India Company, 5-378                             |
| When Marie de Medici became  | Religious troubles caused the Pilgrims to set sail for America, 7-121 |

#### *Summary Statement*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Rubens and Van Dyck represented the very peak, in the north, of the Baroque influence | in painting. In many respects, their results have never been equaled. |
|---|---|

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

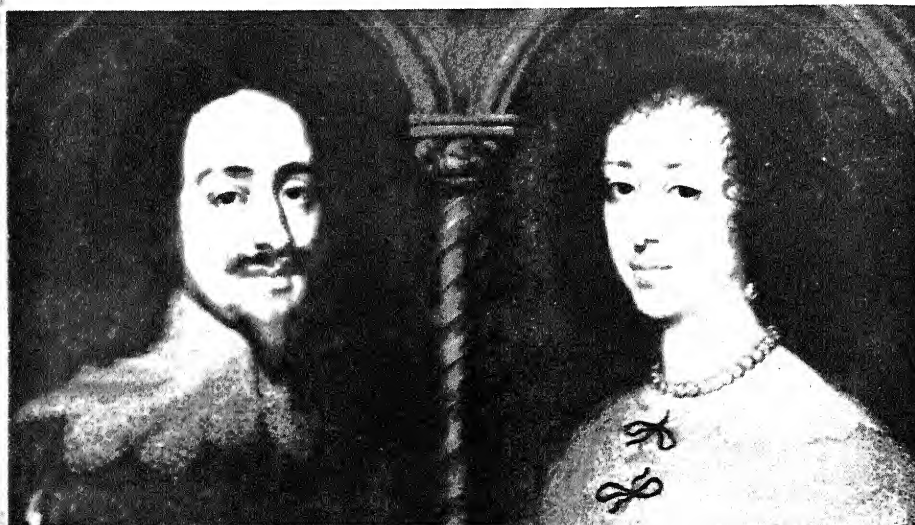


Photo by Alinari

On this page are portraits of King Charles I of England and his queen, Henrietta Maria, all by Van Dyck. The above picture of the King and Queen is one of a dozen he did of them before he had been in England

a year. He pleased the King so much from the very first that within three months of his arrival he was appointed court painter, given a royal pension, and made an English knight—Sir Anthony Van Dyck.



Photos by the Louvre, and Anderson

Here are two of Van Dyck's most famous portraits of the King alone. Probably there is no English king before the days of photographs whose face is so familiar to us as that of Charles I—because of Anthony Van Dyck. He painted all the nobility of the time,



too, and English galleries are very rich in his pictures. So it is sometimes hard to remember that he was not really an Englishman after all. Certainly the British artists took him for their own, and the work of the later British school of portraitists is based upon his work.



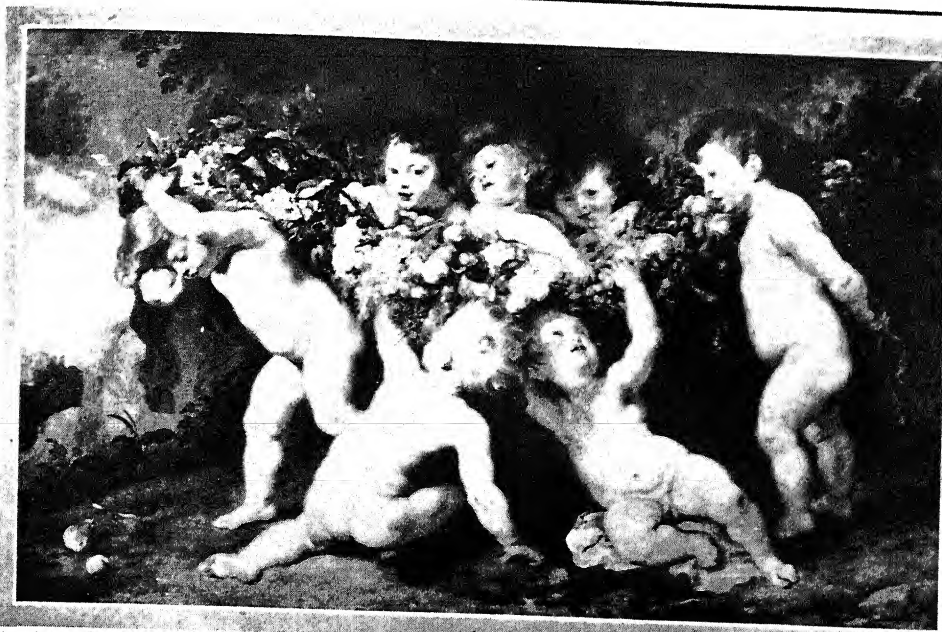


Photo by Hanfstaengl, Munich

Rubens loved to paint beautiful children, with their plump, vigorous bodies and merry eyes—for they are as full of brimming life as he was himself! Sometimes he puts wings on them and calls them cherubs

or cupids, but at other times he makes them just laughing human children. In this famous picture, called "The Garland of Fruits," he has used light, soft colors that make the scene seem very gay and real.

## *The MASTER PAINTERS among the FLEMISH*

### *In the Work of Rubens and Van Dyck the Art of Flanders Reaches a Glorious Climax*

**I**N OUR long series of stories about the rise and growth of the fine arts in Europe we have already told of the birth and early history of a glorious school of painting in Flanders. We may now go on with the story of this Flemish school as it continues in the work of two very famous masters—Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony Van Dyck.

Before we come to these masters, however, we ought to say a word about the history of their troubled country, for the fortunes of the country had a great deal to do with the painting that was done in it.

In Flanders the close of the sixteenth century and the opening of the seventeenth saw a bitter struggle between the Catholics and the Protestants. The country had been handed about from one ruler to another.

In the days of John van Eyck (văn ik'), its first great painter, the land had belonged to the Dukes of Burgundy. When the daughter of one of these dukes married the emperor Maximilian, the land passed under his sway; and then it came into the hands of his successor Charles V, who was king of Spain and also emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

Charles V had spent his childhood in Flanders and knew that the rich little country was well worth cherishing. But the next king of Spain, Philip II, was by no means the same sort of ruler. Philip looked upon Flanders merely as a place from which he could get money. He was altogether a foreign king and he was very much hated by his Flemish subjects.

Philip began by taxing Flanders so harshly that its people were nearly ruined. At the



Here is a glimpse of Rubens in his famous studio. All the finery and magnificence that here surround him probably give us none too splendid an idea of

his house and friends. For Rubens was not one of the company of artists who have been poor and neglected. On the contrary, he was a very rich man.

same time many of the Flemish people, especially in the north, joined in the Protestant revolt against the Catholic church, and the violent king Philip felt that death was the only proper answer to his stubborn subjects. So he sent an army into Flanders under a ruthless governor who would teach the land a lesson, and a terrific struggle went on for a long time.

#### The Two Great Schools of Painting

The northern provinces of the low countries—that is, the land which we now call Holland—were almost entirely Protestant. Their people had always been sturdy lovers of liberty, and they stood out stoutly against the Spanish kings until they finally won their freedom in 1648.

The southern provinces, making up the country which we now call Belgium, had the worst of the struggle. They were partly Catholic, to be sure, but they were very wealthy; and the Spaniards thought their rich cities of Antwerp, Ghent (gĕnt), and Bruges (brūzh) would be good places to

plunder by way of teaching the Protestants a lesson. These provinces saw terrible suffering and did not gain their liberty until much later.

In art one result of all this is that henceforth we have two great schools of painting where there had been only one before. The northern country gives birth to the magnificent painters of the Dutch school, while the Flemish school continues under Catholic patronage in the southern provinces. In a later story we are going to tell all about the great Dutch painters; for the present we have to do with the main masters of the Flemish school, Rubens and Van Dyck.

#### How Young Rubens Became a Painter

With Peter Paul Rubens (rōō'bĕnz), the Baroque (bā-rōk') style, lately born in Italy, comes to the north. Rubens discovered the style in Italy, brought it back to his own land, and through his own overflowing energy impressed it upon the entire heart of the north. For Rubens had an enormous influence over the history of painting—not

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only in his own land, but also in France and England and even in Spain. Indeed Rubens is something more than a single painter; he is rather like a whole school of painting. As you travel through the galleries in Europe you are likely to see more pictures from the brush of Rubens than from that of any other great artist, and you very quickly learn to recognize his work at a glance. You are tempted to think that this extraordinary man who painted so much must have been busy every moment of his life in his studio. Instead of that, however, you find that he was very much a man of the world—a good husband and father, a splendid host, the kindest of friends, an adviser to kings, and several times an ambassador with important missions. He was a man of sunny and serene temperament and a marvelous creative energy.

Rubens was born of simple Flemish people who had been tradesmen on his father's side and tapestry weavers on his mother's. His own father had been ambitious enough to become a lawyer, but his mother seems to have had the brains of the family. As the youngest child of the family, the boy was spared the sight of the terror with which the Spanish rulers were scourging his country. His father had had to fly into Germany; and so Peter Paul was born, near Cologne,

in 1577. But at the age of ten, after his father's death, the boy was taken back home to Antwerp. By this time the Spanish rule was somewhat gentler, and as Catholics the Rubens had little to fear from the oppressors.

His mother meant to make a fine gentleman of Peter Paul. She sent him to a good school where he learned his Latin very well indeed. He was a clever boy at languages. Of course he had spoken German in Cologne, and before very long he could talk in English, French, Italian, or Spanish; in fact, by the time he started out as an artist he was a master of seven languages.

When he left school at the age of thirteen, the boy was sent by his mother to serve as a page in the household of a countess. In a year at this palace he learned

fine manners, but after the one year he came home to announce that he had determined to become an artist. His mother had wanted him to be a famous lawyer, and she was very much disappointed; but Peter Paul spoke up so graciously and eloquently in a family meeting that his relatives gave in and sent him off to study art.

By this time the artists in Flanders were trying their best to be Italian. Peter Paul studied under three of these artists, and while working for the last of them, in 1599, he helped to make the decorations for the



Among his many accomplishments, Rubens could count that of being a great portrait painter. He left us several portraits of his first wife, Isabella Brant, besides the pictures for which she was merely his model. Judging from this one, she must have been a vivid, spirited young woman, bright-eyed and charming.





Photo by the Louvre

Rubens painted a great many story-pictures—scenes from the Bible or from history or legend. This one shows Lot's family escaping from the doomed city of

Sodom. The stormy sky, the beckoning angels, the expressive faces of Lot and his wife—all these have the vigor and life we expect in Rubens.

triumphal entry into Antwerp of the Spanish princess Isabella and her consort Archduke Albert. They had come to be the new rulers of the land.

The next year, at the age of twenty-three, Rubens mounted a horse and started off for Italy, then the goal of all young artists. No sooner had he arrived in Venice than people began to talk about this tall and handsome young man from the north. For Rubens was a very courtly gentleman. He had a high forehead with long auburn hair, a ruddy complexion, and brown eyes that were full of gaiety and gentleness. He wore fine clothes and a beautifully trimmed mustache and beard; and his manners were those of a young prince.

#### At the Court of Mantua

It was obvious, too, that he had the genius of a painter. So the Duke of Mantua, grandson of the man for whom Mantegna (mān-tān'yā) had worked, sent for this remarkable young man from the north as soon as he heard of him, and Rubens remained in

the service of the Duke for the next eight years. He was the court painter and also something more; for the Duke made a friend of him and employed him as an ambassador.

#### When an Ambassador Turned Court Painter

As court painter, Rubens had every chance in the Duke's palace to study the works of such masters as Mantegna and Perugino (pā'rō-jē'nō). He also made frequent trips to Venice for the study of Titian (tīsh'ān) and Tintoretto (tēn'tō-rēt'tō), as also to Florence and Rome, where he saw a whole world of new art; as ambassador he was sent to Spain with a large number of gifts for King Philip III and the people of his court. They were bulky presents to take on such a large journey. For the King there was a coach and seven bay horses; there was also a rock crystal vase filled with perfume, a silver chest, candlesticks, crucifixes, and many other things. Among the other things were a good many copies of famous paintings.

It rained a good deal during the long trip



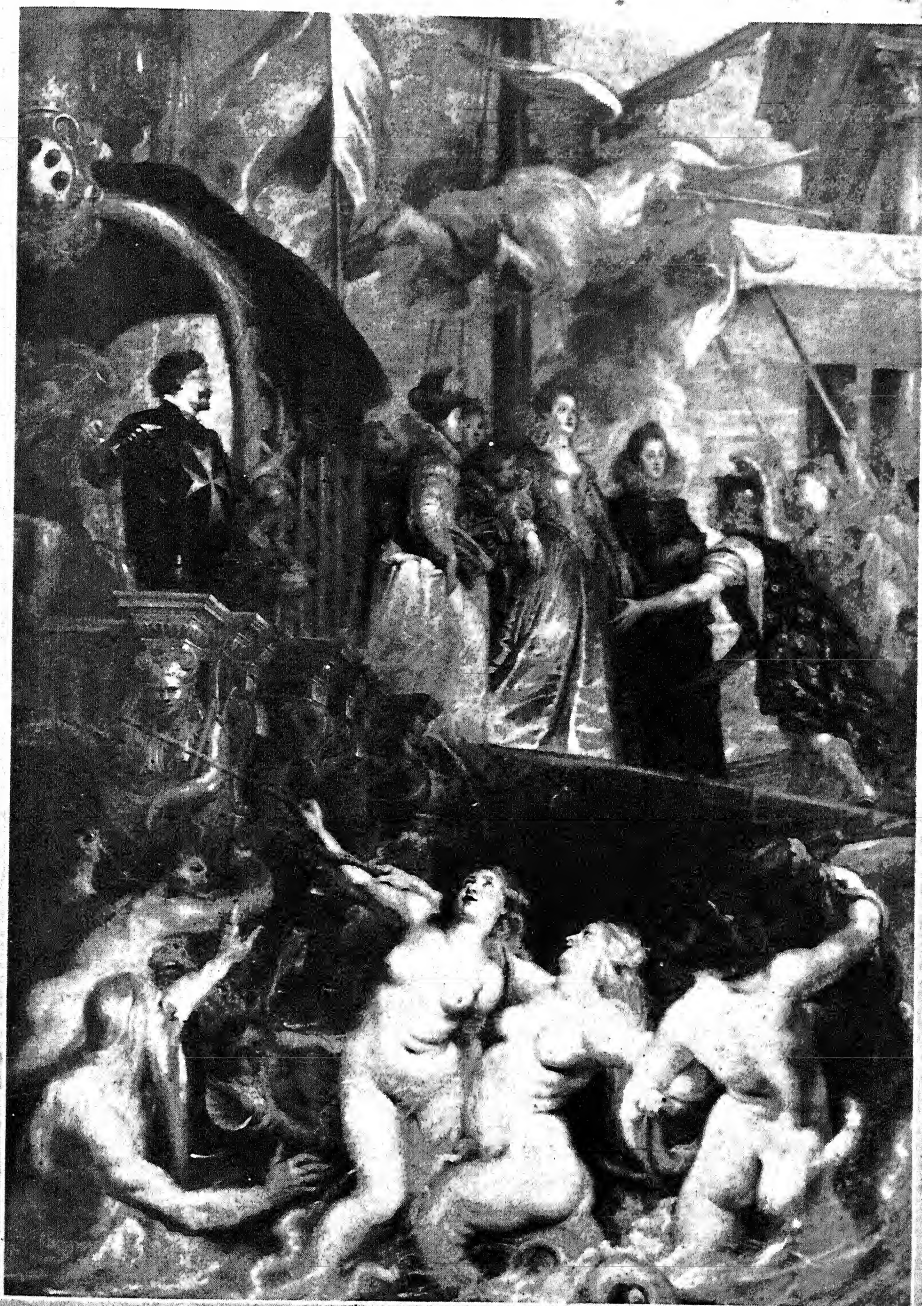


Photo by Alinari

Here is Marie de' Medici stepping off the boat at Marseilles—perhaps the best-known picture in the mighty series of Marie's life, in the Luxembourg palace in Paris. Above the Queen floats an angelic trumpeter; below her the gods and goddesses of the sea rise to

do her homage. We could study for hours the marvelous detail and the balance and design of this picture. But the thing we shall remember longest is the feeling of power and movement. To go through a gallery of Rubens is like moving through a whirlwind.



Photo by Vernacci, Madrid

In this picture of a "Peasant Dance" the figures seem almost to move before our eyes, so vividly has Rubens caught the swirl of their dance. And what a fine landscape it is, too! In our amazement at his great can-

by land and sea and the paintings were seriously damaged, but this made no great trouble for our ambassador. All he had to do was to turn court painter again for a while and paint the pictures over again. Then the Spanish court was so delighted with his work as to order twelve more pictures from his brush.

Back in Italy a year later, Rubens kept painting and traveling until 1608. Then he received word that his mother's health was in a dangerous condition, and he set out at once for home. He rode to Antwerp with all speed only to find that his mother had died before he left Italy.

#### Chief Painter to the Court in Antwerp

Remaining now in Antwerp Rubens was highly honored by the rulers, Albert and Isabella, for whom he had painted decorations just before leaving for Italy eight years earlier. They made him their court painter and thus set him free from the

vases of stories and people we are likely to forget that Rubens was also a great landscape artist. The Englishmen like Constable, who started modern landscape painting, found inspiration in Rubens.

painters' guild; and he now started on a long and magnificent career as the chief painter of his day in his native land.

#### The Vigorous Art of Rubens

He soon married Isabella Brant, whom we know so well from the great number of pictures he has left us of her. The daughter of a famous lawyer, Isabella was a fulsome Flemish beauty whom we behold in hundreds of his pictures scattered through the galleries.

The first thing that strikes us about one of these paintings, as about almost any picture from the brush of Rubens, is that it is so happy and vigorous, so rich and brilliant in color. If we remember that for years the Flemish painters had turned out almost nothing except poor imitations of their Italian models, we can see how the pictures of Rubens must have astonished them. His paintings were like a strong, fresh breeze blowing into the art of the north. In Italy,

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he had learned how to compose his figures and how to make them look round and solid, but all the time he had kept to his native Flemish honesty. So he never tried to make an Italian of Isabella, as so many of the painters around him would have done. He loved her as she was, and he painted her with a joyous vitality which was far beyond the power of any other painter in his land.

These traits appear in all of the multitude of pictures that now came from his hand. His "Peasant Dance," for instance, has a swing in the dancing figures, and even in the very landscape, which speaks of the joyous surging of the blood in your veins when the outdoor air is clear and cool and the sun is shining, and when you cannot keep still because you feel so lively.

At once this joyous, athletic painting became the wonder and the delight of Flanders. And Rubens was overwhelmed with orders, so many that he could not think of filling all of them. That is why he started a workshop with a number of assistants to help with his pictures—some of them to paint figures, others to paint landscape, and still others to put in flowers and minor things. The master himself supervised the design and added the finishing touches.

Rubens always told the truth about the way he did such work. Most of the artists of the time had assistants to help them, but not all of them were so careful as Rubens to state how much was their own work and how much came from their helpers. Rubens would say, "The eagle is by Snyders," or

"This is by my own hand except for the very beautiful landscape, put in by a man who is extremely clever in this type of work," or "This is by my best pupil, but I have gone over it thoroughly myself." Of course the work of the assistants was less expensive than that of the master.

Here is a description of the famous workshop as written by a Danish traveler who saw it:

"We visited the famous and eminent painter Rubens, whom we found at work. While he went right on

with his painting, he was listening to a person who was reading to him and was also dictating a letter. We kept silent for fear of disturbing him, but he spoke to us without stopping his work or the reading or the dictation, and answered all our questions as if to give us proof of his remarkable faculties. Then he ordered a servant to take us around his magnificent palace and to show us the great number of antiquities and all the Greek and Roman



This is one of Rubens' portraits of Helen Fourment, his sixteen-year-old second wife. It is easy to see from the picture that she was beautiful; we may marvel, too, at the richness of her dress. She was the perfect model for Rubens, as well as the perfect wife, for she was exactly the type of buxom Flemish beauty he loved best to put on canvas.





Photo by Gesellschaft, Munich

This is the painting in which Rubens pictures himself walking hand in hand with his bride through their fine garden, on the way to show her her new home. Rubens did some of his best work during the ten years he lived with Helen Fourment in the magnificent

Château de Steen. Not only did he make many portraits of his wife and their children, but he painted many pictures of the beautiful landscape around the château. It was these landscapes which later inspired Constable and the other English landscape artists.

statues which he possesses. We also saw a fine room without any window, lighted only by a large opening in the middle of the ceiling. There a number of young painters were gathered, each busy at a different piece of work for which Rubens had made a pencil drawing with a touch of color here and there. These young artists have to put the ideas of the master into paint, and then the master will give the pictures a final finish."

#### The Daily Life of the Master

In this way Rubens grew to be a very wealthy man. But he was never tempted to take a rest. He always got up at four o'clock in the morning, heard Mass, and then went at once to his studio, where he worked until the daylight began to fail. Late in the afternoon he would run over his collections and then go out riding on one of his favorite

horses. In the evening he would entertain his learned friends.

At the court of the Duke of Mantua in the old days Rubens had met the sister of the Duchess—that Marie de' Medici (má-rē dā mēd'ē-chē) who later became queen of France as the wife of King Henry IV. Many years afterward; when her husband had been killed, the Queen built a new palace in Paris, and remembering the painter she had known down in Italy, she sent at once for Rubens to decorate her splendid home. Of course the French painters did not love her idea of giving the work to a foreigner, but she merely answered that no one in the world except Rubens could do the vast paintings she desired so finely as he.

By this time the Queen had grown to be a fat old lady, and she had never really done anything remarkable. But she had grandiose ideas for the paintings in her new palace,



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and she gave Rubens a heroic set of commissions. There were to be a great many pictures and some of them were to be as much as three stories high; and they were all to tell about the life of this rather dull old lady. The task was large enough, but it would hardly seem to be very hopeful or inspiring.

But if the life of the fat queen was a little lacking in romance, the abundant imagination of Rubens was quite ready to add it. In those days kings and queens stood on a pedestal far above any ordinary mortals, and in Rubens' pictures the lady is attended, to the delight of her court, by all sorts of nymphs and goddesses as she goes through life. No one was allowed to see the pictures until they were all finished and in place, and when the full splendor of them burst upon the eyes of the beholders there was great applause for their magnificence.

Very rich and beautiful these paintings certainly are. As we look at the picture of the Queen arriving at Marseilles, we stand in admiration of the whole scene—the boat with the splendid sweeping pattern of the sails, the Queen's billowing robe, the sea goddesses attendant below, and the light and rosy colors which make us think of clear air and billowing white clouds and sea foam.

The Princess Isabella was another old

friend of Rubens. After her husband had died and left her the sole ruler in Flanders she turned to Rubens for help in settling a treaty with the Dutch. The painter went to Holland as her confidential minister, but he could not manage to arrange the treaty with the sturdy Dutch, who were bent on

having their full freedom or nothing.

Down in Spain, however, the King heard of the painter's tact as an ambassador and sent him over to England to see what could be done about affairs with that country. Even if he was not entirely successful in arranging matters with Charles I, who was now king of England, he made a most delightful impression at the English court, where of course he was already a famous man. But it was while he was away on this mission that his wife died, and he hurried back in sorrow to Antwerp. "I have lost the best of

companions," he wrote, "and since her death there is universal sadness."

To ease his sorrow, he plunged again into affairs of state, and went down to Spain in the heat of midsummer. There he remained for a year while Philip IV tried to make up his mind what to do about the English. In the meantime, Rubens kept busy painting. He painted the King and Queen and the royal family. He was very kindly to the



Of all Van Dyck's portraits this one is probably the most familiar. It is usually called "Baby Stuart," though a more exact title would be "Infant Son of Charles I of England." Yet doubtless most people who now cherish this picture of the little prince do not think of him as a prince at all, but just as a plump baby with a bright, winsome face about to break into a smile.



A row of children's heads like those above shows us that Van Dyck could make children as well as grown

people look aristocratic and elegant and yet show each person as an individual, with traits of his own.



Photos by Anderson, Rome

The family above is one of Van Dyck's portrait groups of the children of King Charles I.

young court painter whom he met at Madrid; this was no other than the great Velasquez (vā-lās'kāth), destined in due time to be one of the chief painters in all history. The young Velasquez was every inch a gentleman, like Rubens himself, but he had been tied down to the court and never permitted to travel. Rubens spent a good deal of time explaining the work of the Italian masters to the younger painter, and especially the

work of Titian; and so eager was the interest of Velasquez that Rubens persuaded the King to let the young gentleman go off to Italy, to see the glory of Italian painting for himself.

At last the King sent Rubens again to England, where he was received with the highest honors. He was knighted by Charles I and given a jeweled sword, a diamond ring, and a diamond hatband; and he received an

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It is always pleasant to imagine the friendships of famous people, or important moments in their lives.

This picture shows Van Dyck taking leave of his master, Rubens, as he sets out for Italy.

honorary degree from the University of Cambridge. We are told that one of the English courtiers asked Rubens, "Does the ambassador of His Catholic Majesty amuse himself with painting?" "No," replied Rubens, "I sometimes amuse myself with being an ambassador."

### Rubens' Marriage to Helen Fourment

Once more at home, laden with honors, the great painter married a second time. "I have married a young woman of the middle class, although everyone advised me to choose a lady from the court. But I was afraid I should find my companion afflicted with pride, that plague of the noble class. That is my reason for choosing a wife who would not blush when she saw me take up my brush."

The painter's new bride, just sixteen years of age, was the celebrated Helen Fourment (fōor'mōN'), said to be the most beautiful girl in Antwerp, and intimately known to-day by everyone who visits galleries of art. For Rubens left us her picture on many and many a canvas. In its own way every one

of his splendid pictures tells us of the happy life he lived with her. There is one of the pictures in which he is showing his new bride the beautiful home which is to be hers. At the left we see the pavilion of the splendid château, while Helen and her painter are walking happily through the garden hand in hand.

The pictures of this period are among the most beautiful that Rubens left us. After ten more happy years the great artist died, full of honors, in 1640. But his art has never died. He has had a mighty influence over painting ever since his day, and his genius was so many-sided that in each country in Europe something different was made under its inspiration. He loved to make vast pictures, glowing pictures, pictures of vigor and happiness. He has been called the most magnificent of artists. This does not imply that he is the greatest, of course, though he was a very great one. It means that he is one of the most splendid in vitality.

When Rubens said that any given picture was "by my best pupil," he meant that Anthony Van Dyck (văn dīk') had painted it.



Born in Antwerp, Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641) was an accomplished painter at the age of nineteen. At about that age he came to work in the studio of Rubens, and it was not long before he was the master's right-hand man. After a short first trip to England, he went down into Italy to paint and study, and remained there for about five years. He was very quick to take up the great manner of the Italian painters. He then returned to Antwerp, finished his training under Rubens, and came into fame as a painter of very elegant portraits.

#### The Refined Elegance of Van Dyck

Van Dyck was exactly the kind of portrait painter who was wanted at the court of Charles I in England. Rubens may have been a little too hearty, a little too fleshy for the English, but the highly refined work of Van Dyck made a very strong appeal to them. So Van Dyck went over to England in 1632, and as court painter remained there mainly for the next nine years.

He was so highly popular that he had to start a workshop like that of Rubens to fill all of the orders that flowed into his studio. The orders were chiefly for portraits—though, like Rubens, he also painted many religious pictures—and sometimes the rush of trade forced the painter to neglect the likeness a little in order to be sure to produce a fine picture. All of the Van Dyck portraits look a little alike—partly because the painter was too hurried to study individual faces and partly because he had an ideal of grace and grandeur and slender elegance which he felt ought to be shown of any noble sitter who came to his studio.

That is the kind of elegance which Van Dyck gave to Charles I himself when he painted the King's picture—the elegance of a fine gentleman, with an aristocratic air, a thin face, and very delicate hands. The same grace appears in his painting of Queen Henrietta Maria in her dress of shimmering white satin and her pearls, as she appears before a velvet curtain of gold and dull blue, green, and soft dull red. We can be pretty sure of a painting by Van Dyck if we look at nothing but the hands; they are always

very delicate hands which touch lightly, but never seem to grasp. Even King Charles does not grasp his sword like a soldier. All the royal children are just such offspring as a king and queen ought to have—stiff little dolls in fine clothes, who are going to grow up to be just like their fathers and mothers.

When Van Dyck paints his own portrait for us, he shows us just the same kind of gentleman. He looks like a man born to be a courtier. Perhaps it is a very faithful likeness and perhaps not; but certainly it is the way Van Dyck wanted to look, and the way he wanted everyone to look. It seems also to be the way the English gentleman and ladies wanted to look, at least in their portraits; and so there is a great contrast between the vital, athletic figures of Rubens and the slender, gentlemanly ones of his pupil Van Dyck. Over in Flanders it was a distinction to be a bit fleshy, while in England it was distinguished to be thin.

Within the limits which this ideal of elegance sets around a painter's art, Van Dyck is a very great painter of portraits. If you will study all his pictures which you will find in this book, you ought to have very little trouble in recognizing his work wherever you may see it in the galleries of the world.

When Rubens died in 1640, Van Dyck went back to Antwerp with the idea of taking over the work of his master, but his high prices frightened people, and he also lacked the vitality to carry on the vast work of Rubens. Indeed, he survived his master only one year, and came back to England to die.

#### When English Art Was under a Cloud

Not long after his death his patron, Charles I, went to his own end on the scaffold and England was convulsed by a revolution. In the days of Cromwell's sway, a great deal of fine old art was swept away in England by the Puritans, who thought of it as vanity or something worse than vanity. The fine arts did not have much chance again in England until the Puritan Revolution was over, and they hardly flourished again until after the beginning of a new century.



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# The HISTORY of ART

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## Reading Unit No. 18

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### THE ARTISTS OF THE SUN KING

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

- How the French, under Louis XIV, set the world's standard of taste, 11-231
- Why his age was the most splendid period the modern world has ever seen, 11-231
- How Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorrain started a new French art in Italy, 11-234
- How Poussin was called back to Paris to decorate the Louvre, 11-236
- Why Poussin's figures were often only an excuse for painting lovely landscapes, 11-237
- Claude Lorrain was among the first to take his easel out of doors, 11-237
- How the French Academy in Rome was founded, 11-239
- Why Versailles shows both the best and the worst that art can do under royal edict, 11-239

#### *Things to Think About*

- What did Louis XIV do to make his palace and his country the art center of the world?
- How could a new French art begin in Italy?
- Poussin seemed to feel that he had the blood of ancient Greek shepherds in his veins. Why was this?
- How did Lorrain achieve the dreamy grandeur of his harbor scenes?

#### *Picture Hunt*

- How did Girardon heighten the flattery in his sculpture of the "Sun King"? 11-231
- How did Poussin come to be one of the earliest landscape painters? 11-234

#### *Related Material*

- The building of Versailles by Louis XIV, 11-490-91, 12-411
- The Sun King's life and reign, 12-410-13
- He buys the tapestry industry, 12-144
- He declares, "I am the State," 7-354
- Molière, the great dramatist, was a friend of Louis XIV, 13-111
- La Salle, who came to America, was one of the Sun King's cavaliers, 13-485
- Louis XIV fought a good many wars, 6-75, 184, 219, 331, 12-411
- The execution of Charles I of England, 6-66, 127, 12-409

#### *Summary Statement*

- The reign of Louis XIV saw France established as the art center of the world, a position which she has held even to the present day, even though greater painting was being done in other countries.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



Photo by Anderson, Rome

This is one of Claude Lorrain's famous paintings of harbors; it is called "The Ancient Port of Ostia." Nothing could be more characteristic of Claude than this picture. There are the ancient Roman buildings with their calm beauty and strong, soaring pillars. There are the proud galleys, with banners flying. There are the little human figures, moving serenely through some happy dream. All is arranged, or composed, into a beautiful pattern, and all is lighted by a strange glow

that comes from the far sky at the back of the picture. Much as he loved nature, in his paintings Claude was not very "natural"; he always arranged the landscape to give an effect of dreamlike beauty, and he usually put in a good many fine classic buildings. It was in his sketches and notebooks that he showed his love of ordinary nature; his famous sketch book called "Liber Veritatis," or "The Book of Truth," inspired Turner two centuries later to make a book in imitation.

On his proudly-stepping charger, Louis XIV is presented to us done in lasting bronze. The sculptor is François Girardon (1628-1715), one of the best-known of the artists who labored to make the splendid palace of Versailles one mighty song of praise to Louis, the "Sun King." Characteristically, Girardon has tried to heighten the flattery by giving the bewigged eighteenth century Louis a suggestion of the look of a Roman emperor.



Photo by Alinari

## The ARTISTS of the SUN KING

*These Are Some of the Men Who Made the Reign of Louis XIV  
Illustrious in Art*

**I**F YOU ask almost any man what nation seems to have the best taste in the arts, you are very likely to be told that it is France. In Paris the very workmen and shopgirls know a good picture when they see it and can often talk about it with a good deal of intelligence. This has been true of the French for a good many centuries, during which they have probably done more than any other people to set the standard of taste in the fine arts of the world. In the light of these facts, it is a strange thing that the French themselves have not produced more heroic figures among the painters and the sculptors. They have certainly produced a very large number of excellent artists who have had many imitators in many lands. They are fine teachers

and critics of the arts. Yet if you call the roll of the supreme artists, you will name men like Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian in Italy; like Dürer and Holbein in Germany; like Rubens in Flanders, Rembrandt in Holland, Velasquez in Spain, Turner in England, and certain other men of these and other countries; but you will find it hard to think of a French painter to include in your supreme list. That is what an English poet, Matthew Arnold, meant when he spoke of France "famed in all great arts, in none supreme."

We are going to talk about French art in the period when the French were most intent on splendor of artistic production. That is, of course, the age of Louis XIV, doubtless the most splendid period that any nation in

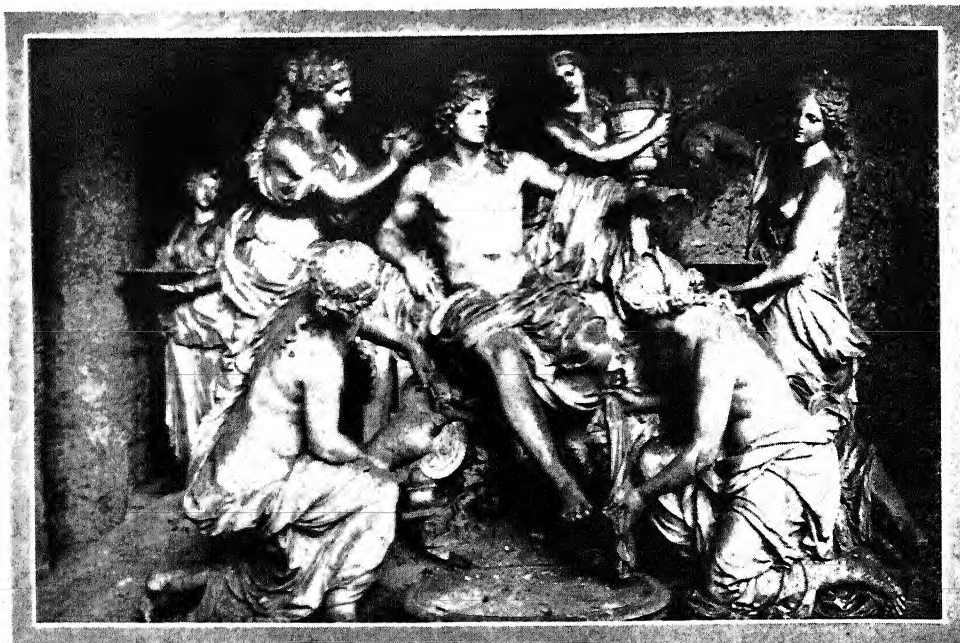


Photo by Museum at Versailles

This sculptured group at Versailles is called "Apollo Served by the Nymphs." The artists of Versailles were fond of showing us the gods and goddesses of Roman myth, and of trying to make their statues remain as of Roman art. This Apollo, for instance, is

certainly copied after the Apollo Belvedere. The sculptor is Girardon, but he probably worked from plans by Le Brun, the director-general of art at Versailles. For at Versailles all the artists worked together, and it is sometimes hard to tell which is which.

the modern world has seen—Louis XIV, the Sun King, who was so eager during his very long reign to make his palace and his country the artistic center of the world. If we could travel to the palace or the city of Louis, we should see many a splendid piece of fine art in every form still remaining to remind us of his day, but in the major arts we should meet with no single master workman who can rank with the great artists whose names we have just been calling.

#### When Art Stood Still in France

Possibly the reason lies in part in the character of Louis XIV himself and in the theory by which he ruled his country. He was king by divine right, he thought, and therefore he could do no wrong. He was the state, as he said, and the realm of France was the creation of his edicts. The art of that realm must therefore befit him and be worthy of him. It must be always correct, elegant, proper, and above all, stately.

His way of making sure that art would be

proper and elegant and stately was to found academies made up of the most proper artists of the land, who would dictate what should be done in the arts—which too often meant dictating what the great king wanted done. In this way art came in for a good deal of tight lacing, a thing which is seldom or never good for it, especially when it is mainly commanded to glorify a pompous gentleman who happens to be king and who is getting a little old.

What happened in the day of Louis XIV is what will very often happen when the fine arts are put into too tight a strait-jacket. The best artists went off in their own way, rather like truant boys, and did what they loved to the best of their ability far from the confines of the academy. That is why the two main French artists of this period did nearly all their work in Italy and were unknown in France during their lifetime.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century there were no outstanding artists in the land of France. As we have told in another



## THE HISTORY OF ART

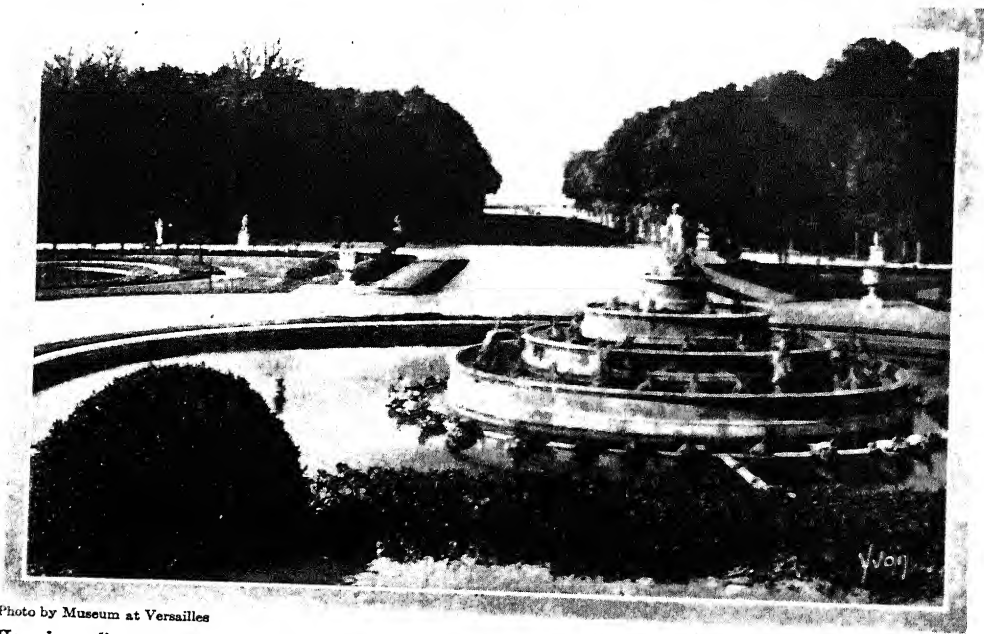


Photo by Museum at Versailles

Here is a glimpse of the celebrated gardens of Versailles—the Fountain of the Goddess Latona and the green vista beyond. This park was planned by André Le Nôtre (ôn'drâ' lê nô'tr'), one of the greatest of

landscape gardeners. It is laid out in formal geometric designs, and scattered thick with fountains and pools and statues. It is a park, in fact, which matches well the magnificence of the palace.



Photo by Museum at Versailles

This is the bedroom of Louis XIV at Versailles, as it looks to-day. For many years the Grand Monarch slept here whenever he was at home, and here in

1715 he died. Surely one would need to be a Grand Monarch to feel at home in all this crowded splendor of carving and tapestry and elaborate furnishings!



Photo by Hanfstaengl, Munich

The official subject of this painting is "The Angel Dictating the Gospels to St. Matthew"; but the figures are so nearly lost in the vast distances of the picture that it is sometimes called just "Landscape near Rome." This is the way in which Poussin came to be

one of the earliest landscape painters—by painting landscape and putting in a few figures to give the picture a name. Notice the soft, diffused light. These landscapes were only one sort of picture Poussin painted. Many show scenes from history or mythology.

story Marie de' Medici (mä'rē' dā mēd'ē-chē) insisted on sending for Rubens (rōō'-bēnz) from Flanders to do her painting when she wanted to decorate her great new palace. A little later, in 1648, the great minister of the King founded the Royal Academy of painting and sculpture, and this academy proceeded in a very royal way to do very little indeed.

#### The New French Art in Italy

But in the meanwhile two Frenchmen down in Italy were starting a new French art about which Frenchmen back home knew little or nothing. These men were Nicholas Poussin (1594-1665) and Claude Gellée (1600-1682), who is always called Claude Lorraine because he was born in the province of Lorraine.

A Norman by birth, Nicholas Poussin (pōō'sāN') as a young man came up to study

in Paris, but he had no success there and found it very hard to make a living; so he started off, as did all of the artists who could in those days, to go to Italy. Twice before he found his way into that country, his money gave out, but he finally arrived in the land of his dreams and he stayed there for the rest of his life. He was thirty years old when he reached Rome, twenty years after Rubens had been there. He had seen the work of Titian (tīsh'ān) in Venice and in Bologna (bō-lōn'yā) he visited the well-known art school of the Caracci (kā-rāt'chē) brothers, who were doing all they could to mingle in painting the grandeur of Raphael (rā'fā-ēl) and the prettiness of Correggio (kōr-rēd'jō).

These were the days when a good many nations in the north had broken away from the Catholic church. England, Holland, and most of Germany had become Protestant.

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In the southern countries the Catholic church was trying to make the old religion more real and more appealing, and one of the paths of appeal lay through the arts. The Protestants often denounced statues and pictures and shrines as mere vanities if not idolatries. The Catholics in reply filled their churches more than ever with pictures and statues to appeal to the people. So even if the greatest of the Italian artists were all gone there was a ferment of artistic creation in Italy all through the time when Poussin lived there.

However much he admired the great Italian painters, Poussin was little interested in the newer Baroque (bâ-rōk') style, which we have described in some of our other stories; he went his own way and rather independently made himself into a great painter. And the Italians recognized him as such a painter.

When the Italians admired him, it was in spite of the fact that his art was rather different from theirs. What had captivated the imagination of Poussin was the ideal of ancient Rome, and of ancient Greece as seen through Roman spectacles—for in those days no one knew much about Greece except through what she had taught to Rome. Poussin was taken captive by the marvels of the ancient remains in the city of Rome and the country lying around it. That city

seemed to him to have sat and watched all history go by and to have grown wise and mellow and peaceful in its long experience. As he walked the streets of the Eternal City, he could almost hear the spirits of the ancients whispering in his ear, and could almost feel himself going back to live in the great days of old.

Other men before Poussin had tried to go back to those ancient days. Mantegna, (māntān'yā), for instance, had felt ancient blood running in his veins, but for him it was the stern blood of Roman soldiers and conquerors. For Poussin, it was rather the blood of Greek shepherds on the slopes of the mountains in Arcadia.

So we have his pictures of such shepherds and their land. The costumes are not those that any Greek shepherd ever wore, and doubtless no shepherd anywhere ever looked very much like the ones in Poussin's pictures. Poussin was not a Greek; no matter how hard he tried he could

not help being a Frenchman of the seventeenth century living in Italy. But for all that, his pictures of shepherds seem strangely real because he had a genius for making his own beautiful dream come true on canvas. He has studied real people and knows how to draw them, but he prefers to give them flowing draperies and an ancient world

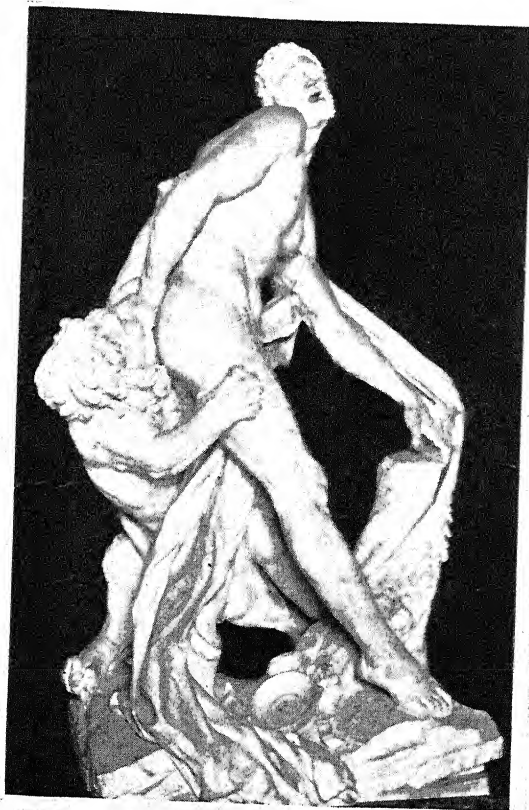


Photo by Giraudon, Paris

Pierre Puget was a famous sculptor of Louis XIV's time, but he had nothing to do with the decorations of Versailles. He came from Marseilles, in Southern France, and did his finest work there and in Toulon. He had much power and energy, as we can see from this statue of Milo of Crotona. Milo was an athlete famous in Greek legend for his mighty strength. The sculptor has chosen to show him in his death struggle. He has tried to tear open a half-split tree—his hand is imprisoned and useless—and wild beasts set upon him and devour him.



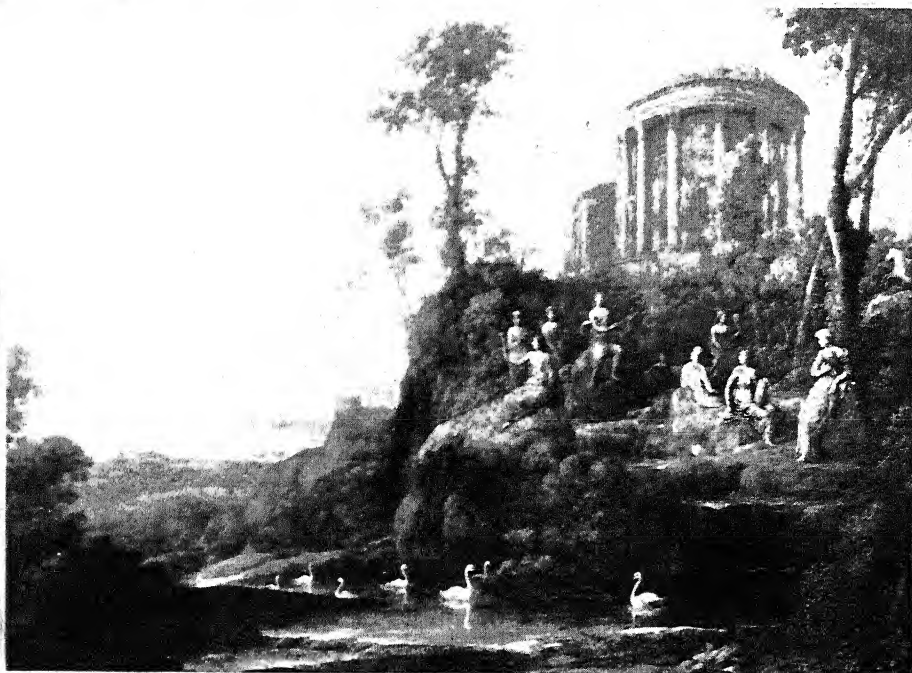


Photo by Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This is another of Claude Lorrain's serenely beautiful dream-landscapes. It is called "Parnassus." Parnassus, you remember, was the home of the Muses, goddesses who ruled over the arts. But even when he is showing the Muses at home, Claude is much

more interested in giving them a beautiful, light-drenched landscape to live in, and a gracious old classic temple, than in painting the goddesses themselves. In fact, he was so little interested in the people of his pictures that he often let assistants paint them.

to live in, both made chiefly of his own imagination.

#### When Poussin Went to Paris

Poussin did not paint such large canvases as most of the Italian artists, perhaps because he did not have enough money, but his art is nevertheless full of dignity and grandeur. He took the art very seriously, and felt that any good picture must always have a fine and noble subject. In this last respect, he was in sharp disagreement with the painters of the time in Naples, who were rather tired of painting nobles and wanted to paint street urchins and gamblers rather more than they wanted to paint saints and heroes. It may have been this nobility in the painting of Poussin that finally brought him to the attention of the French king, Louis XIII. When this king died his great minister Richelieu (rē'shē-lyū) looked around for a suitable painter to glorify the royalty of

France, and sent down into Italy for Poussin. Then Poussin came back to Paris to decorate the King's palace of the Louvre (lōō'vr'). At once the jealous Parisian painters who had protested when Rubens was called from Antwerp set up a new clamor over this unknown painter from Italy. Poussin could not be very happy at the court, even though nobles now pressed him with orders for paintings, and after two years he went back to Italy for the rest of his life.

#### An Artist Who Loved Landscapes

Poussin had a tender love for the beautiful Italian landscape. He had seen that landscape as painted by the Venetians and he had watched it lovingly with his own eyes. When he paints a picture of it, to be sure, he does not call it simply a landscape picture; for as yet the time was hardly at hand when it would seem fitting to make a picture of scenery alone. Poussin obviously felt that



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there was something nobler in painting human beings; so into a given picture he will put two little figures and then say that the painting is a picture of the angel dictating the Gospel to St. Matthew. But of course the title and the figures are not much more than an excuse for painting a lovely view with sunshine and shadow lying far back into distance. Now it surely was not landscape that made the people back in France think of Poussin while they were trying so hard to be grand. It must have been the stately gods and goddesses from ancient times which we find in his pictures.

The other great French painter in the Italy of that day met with less success and fame than Poussin—at least until a long time after he was dead and gone. This was Claude Lorrain (klōd lō'-rāN'). Claude was a very poor boy, and he had hardly any schooling; indeed, there is a story, though a doubtful one, that he began life as a pastry cook. But his heart was set

on being a painter, and somehow he found his way to Italy—there to get an education in the arts, largely through his own study and practice.

Italy was the land of Claude's dreams, from first to last. The beauty of the country filled him with such delight that he was

happy to spend all his days watching it and painting it. He admired the ancient gods and goddesses in the pictures of Poussin, and in the fashion of the time he tried to give his own pictures noble subjects too; but somehow he could never bring himself to make the figures in his pictures much

more than small details. It was the outdoors that he really loved—the sunshine and shadow, the wonderful distances, the deep green of trees, and above all the sunlight falling on the water. These are the glory of his pictures.

In our day it is a very common thing to see an artist standing, palette in hand, by some water's edge or in some country nook, painting the scene before him. But that would have been a stranger sight in the old days. Up to the time of Claude, painting was an indoor affair, carried on in a studio. A man like Leonardo da Vinci (lā'ō-nār'-dō dā vën'chē) might indeed stop to sketch some flower or clump of trees that caught

his fancy, and the painters of the Flemish school must have made sketches out of doors. But to make up a whole picture of these sketches was quite another thing, and that was not yet being done. Mere outdoor scenery was not yet a fit subject for the painter.

Then came Rubens and the Dutch painters

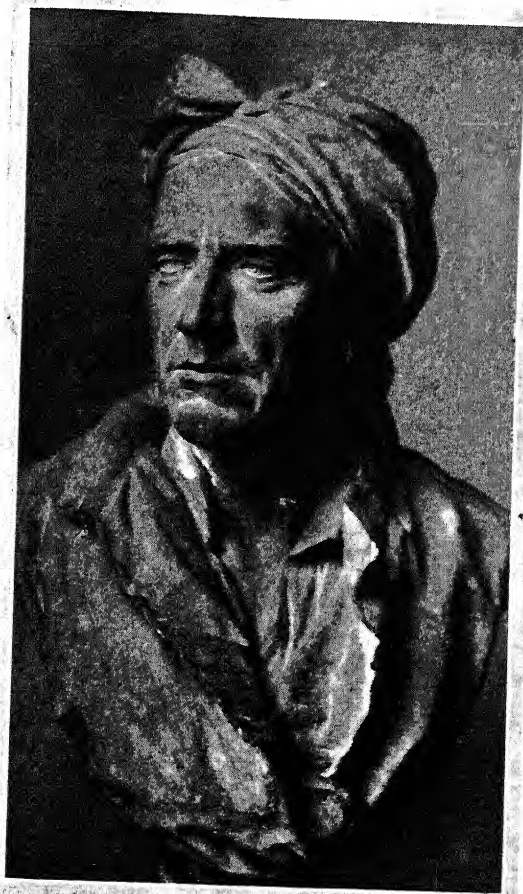


Photo by Giraudon, Paris

This is a bust of a sculptor by another sculptor—of Nicholas Coustou (kōō'stōō') by Guillaume Coustou. The Coustous were famous toward the end of Louis XIV's reign. They carried on the work of Coysevox (kvā'zē-vōks'), probably the most vigorous of the artists working under Le Brun at Versailles.



Photo by Oliver

It is interesting to compare this painting by Claude Lorrain—it is called "The Departure of Cleopatra"—

who loved so much the sight of their own land; and down in Italy the simple-hearted Claude was about the first painter to do much work outdoors. He studied Nature in a way that hardly any man had studied her in before, watching to see how she did her tricks with light and shade and atmosphere; and the sketches that resulted are so full of keen observation that our landscape painters often study them to this very day.

When Claude came to do the painting, however, he went back to the studio and wove his picture out of memory. He did not care so much about the various kinds of flowers as old Hubert van Eyck (*vän ik'*) had cared, and it did not make much difference to him whether a given tree was a pine or an oak. What he loved in the outdoors was the pattern of light and shade, and the airy space, and these are the things he wanted to paint.

We can see how he painted these things in such a picture as his "Repose during the Flight into Egypt." Here he has a dark

with his seaport already shown. The patterns of the two pictures are almost identical.

foreground with trees framing a river valley, while back in the distance the light opens out to far-away hills.

Perhaps the most interesting of Claude's pictures are his scenes of harbors. These are not exactly the harbors he saw in his travels, with gallant sailing ships riding at anchor and sturdy fishing boats tied up to old wharves. They are dream harbors, where Aeneas is bidding farewell to Dido, or St. Ursula is setting out for the Holy Land. Stately buildings rise up at the harbor's edge, with steps leading down to the water; and the masts of the boats are outlined against a low sun which makes a flare of light in the background and a shining path across the water to the shore.

These two painters, Poussin and Claude, may be called the fathers of French painting, even though Claude did not come into his own until long after his death. While these two were working in Italy, a great deal of art was being produced up in France; for under Louis XIV the land saw a great outburst of art that aimed to be grand even if

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it seldom managed to leave us masterpieces in painting or sculpture.

When the Royal Academy was founded, it took art out of the hands of the guilds which had directed it ever since the Middle Ages. It placed art in the hands of the king, or of his ministers, and gave it little to do except to glorify the king himself. And whatever else art may now try to do, it always strives to be as grand as the king and his brilliant court.

The fountain of artistic inspiration was still in Italy, and there the French artists would go for study. To that end was founded the French Academy in Rome; and to this day the highest honor a young French artist can win is the Rome prize, which takes him for three years of study at the French Academy in Rome.

The favorite painter of Louis XIV was Charles Le Brun (1619-

1690). A picture from the hand of Le Brun (lē brŭN) showing the King's coronation will show about the best he could do, though all the splendor of the spectacle fails to make it a very good piece of painting.

The sculpture of the period, like the painting, is grander than it is gracious or beautiful. The King liked to think of himself as another emperor like the emperors in old Rome, and his sculptors were likely to make a rather odd thing of him as he played the part. They might give him a wig of his own

time with a breastplate and armor from ancient Rome; and then leave his legs bare like those of the warriors of old!

The chief French sculptor of the time was Pierre Puget (pyēr pū'zhē'). He did some very fine work, but like the two great painters of the period, he lived most of his life (1622-

1694) in Italy. He was not employed on any of the endless statues that adorn the vast palace and gardens which the Sun King made for his glory at Versailles (vēr'sā'y').

Versailles! With its vast, grand, cold palace, and its vast, grand, formal gardens all laid out in patterns from geometry, Versailles shows us thousands of examples of what the taste of the Sun King could inspire in the painting, the sculpture, and in all the other arts and crafts of that day. It shows the best and the worst that art can do by royal edict. It shows us almost

nothing in bad taste, but almost nothing that bears the regal stamp of genius. It seems to offer to its millions of visitors a perfect mirror of the life at court under the grand monarch of three hundred years ago. It spreads out a vast panorama of bygone grandeur, only to leave us frigid in the presence of so much magnificence. A monument to so much else, it is also a monument to the truth that genius cannot be born at the nod of a monarch, and that supreme art must always wait for genius.



Photo by Olivier

Antoine Coysevox (1640-1720) did this bust of Colbert, the Sun King's famous minister of finance.

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## Reading Unit

No. 19

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### THE GLORY OF SPANISH PAINTING

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### *Interesting Facts Explained*

How a Greek became the first great Spanish painter, 11-243  
Why El Greco's people seem like moving spirits in a vision, 11-244  
How El Greco caught the very essence of the Spanish nobility, 11-247  
How Velasquez taught himself to tell the truth in his portraits, 11-249  
How he made an excellent por-

trait of an ugly king and became court painter, 11-251  
Velasquez made fresh and living portraits of dull faces year after year, 11-252  
Why he painted dimly or clearly to control the attention of the eye, 11-256  
How a great period ended with two painters of ragged children and sentimental Virgins, 11-258

#### *Picture Hunt*

What do El Greco's paintings of Spanish gentlemen reveal to us? 11-243  
How did he make his "Burial of Count Orgaz" so moving? 11-244

How did Velasquez control the eye that looks at his "Maids of Honor"? 11-251  
What are the characteristics of all four of Velasquez's portraits shown on 11-253?

#### *Related Material*

Spain's Golden Age under Philip II, 13-73  
The rule of the Hapsburgs and the time of greatest glory, 6-325  
Spain makes history with her conquests and explorations in the New World, 7-113-19, 230-34  
The French conquer Madrid, 11-306-9

The Catholic church in Spain was all-powerful, 6-327-34  
Spain had some famous writers, 13-73-80  
The Spaniards were in the slave trade, 5-448  
The Spaniards were cruel in America, 7-76-79, 5-498-500

#### *Summary Statement*

Though Spanish art was greatly influenced by the Italian Renaissance, as were all other national arts of the period, it nevertheless

developed a style of its own and became, for a time, one of the greatest national arts.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*



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## Reading Unit No. 20

### THE PAINTER OF THE SOUL OF MAN

*Note: For basic information not found on this page, consult the general Index, Vol. 15.*

*For statistical and current facts, consult the Richards Year Book Index.*

#### Interesting Facts Explained

- How the sturdy Dutch broke away from the Spanish crown, and learned to live and paint as they chose, 11-261
- Why the good Dutch burghers often like their "little masters" better than their great ones, 11-262
- Why Frans Hals, a jolly roisterer, was too big to be a mere photographer, 11-264
- How Vermeer, a master who died in poverty, painted our loveliest picture of a town, 11-268
- How Van Ruysdaël did his famous "Mill," a subject more poetic and melancholy than real, 11-270
- Why Rembrandt, "the painter of the human soul," defied his patrons and all rules, 11-271
- Why Rembrandt's painting is "lit from within" and reaches out beyond ordinary experience, 11-277
- How he died a forgotten man, but Holland's greatest painter, 11-277

#### Picture Hunt

- What did Frans Hals love most to put into his portraits? 11-263
- Why are Vermeer's paintings of simple people at their daily tasks so touching? 11-269
- How did Rembrandt give action to his famous "Night Watch"? 11-275

#### Related Material

- Holland is a land of canals and dikes, 6-352-54
- Holland's native peacefulness was constantly interrupted by invasions, 6-352-55
- The Dutch were early explorers of America, 13-476
- When the Hapsburgs ruled both Spain and Holland, 6-325
- The Catholic church could not quite extend its rule from Spain to Holland, 6-327-34
- Holland establishes her independence, 6-198
- The Dutch struggled with Spain and were the rivals of the English for control of the sea, 10-169-70

#### Summary Statement

- The Dutch painters, as represented by such masters as Hals and Rembrandt, gave to the world a school of art that is as admirable in its aims as any that ever existed.

*(Also See Bibliography, Vol. 15)*

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Photo by Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

"The Jealous Husband," by Nicholas Maes (1632-1693). Maes, a pupil of Rembrandt, was yet another of the painters of "genre," or everyday scenes, who set down the record of seventeenth century Holland.



Photo by the National Gallery

"The Duet," by Gabriel Metsu (1630-1667). This artist is famous for his charming scenes, such as this, from the comfortable, pleasant life of the cultivated middle-class Hollanders of his day.



Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art

"The Musician," by Bartholomeus van der Helst (1613-1670). Most of van der Helst's best-known pictures are portraits, either of single people or of groups.



Photo by Amsterdam Museum

"Old Woman in Meditation," by Gabriel Metsu. This fine study of an old lady shows that Metsu studied Rembrandt before turning to his own later style.



In their long wars with Spain the Dutch had learned to be brave and victorious soldiers; yet they never called for historical paintings to celebrate the heroic story of the winning of their independence. The nearest they came to celebrating it in painting was in many pictures—like this one—which show a group of soldiers. Our picture is of "Captain Reael's Com-

pany," nicknamed "the lean company"; it was painted by Frans Hals in 1637. No one could make these paintings, which are like group photographs, more vigorous and lifelike than could Hals. This particular picture was finished by another artist, but the figures at the left are Hals's own. The swaggering standard bearer at the extreme left is in Hals's best style.

## The PAINTER of the SOUL of MAN

*Among All the Artists, Who Can Make a Face Express a Mind and a Heart So Well as Rembrandt?*

**I**N THIS story we are going to meet one of the master artists of all time—an artist who came as near as anyone has ever come to painting the *soul* of man. It will be the famous Rembrandt (rēm'brānt), chief member of the Dutch school of painting.

In other stories we have seen the great Rubens (rōō'bēnz) at work in Flanders and the greater Velasquez (vā-lās'kāth) busy with his brush in Spain; and we have met many other artists who were making beautiful things in the same seventeenth century in which these masters flourished. Each of these men belongs distinctly to his own land, though since each one was a genius their work has made a great appeal to all mankind. A portrait by Rubens will have the robust strength of Flanders, with a sweep of bright color and vigorous, flowing strokes of the brush. A portrait by Velasquez will show the fine aristocratic air of Spain, with

the melting tone and the cool airiness of its painter. A portrait by Rembrandt will show a round Dutch face transformed by strange, soft light into a countenance full of mystery; it will not be quite of flesh and blood, and yet it will be more real and human than any other painted face.

But before we come to Rembrandt we ought to say something about the remarkable Dutch school of which he was the chief glory.

When little Holland shook herself free from the Spanish rulers who had been oppressing her, she was about as different a land from Spain as any European country could well be, and every difference left its mark upon her art. Spain is a land of wild mountains, Holland a flat country of gardens and pastures. Spain was a land of aristocrats, Holland one of worthy merchants. The Spanish were violently Catholic, the Dutch stubbornly Protestant. That is why



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they fought each other so long and so fiercely, till Holland finally won her freedom. And while the Dutch were fighting so hard for their country they learned to have a devoted love for the country they heroically won. It shows in their art. The Dutch loved their home, they loved homelike folk; and they wanted their artists to paint the homeland and its people.

In breaking away from the Spanish king and the Catholic church, Holland was also breaking away from a great deal of fine art. All through the centuries, art had been busy for the courts and for the church. But now the Dutch wanted no kingly pomp in their pictures, and they felt that images of saints and angels in their churches would be no better than idols. So they gave up all that, and art had to find other subjects than princes and saints.

But art found plenty of other subjects. There were many rich folk in Holland, wealthy from the thriving trade they did, and the artists had to paint pictures which these folk would buy. What would they buy so readily as pictures of themselves? And what would they buy next if not pictures of their homes, their countryside, their cows and their sheep? These were the subjects to which the Dutch painters had the good sense to turn.

What the good Dutch burghers (*bûr'gêr*)—the free citizens of the towns—would have really loved, if only they could have had them, would have been photographs. But there were no cameras in the world as yet, and the artists had to do the camera's work as best they could, to make the most faithful

pictures they could manage of their sitters. Down in Spain the courtly Velasquez could put in some mere splash of paint for a white ruff, but in Holland each man wanted his enormous ruff painted in full detail, just as it stood so stiffly around his worthy neck. That is why you see so many stiff white ruffs in the old Dutch portraits.

Now all this does not sound like a very inspiring program for the artists. There is no great joy in being a camera. The Dutch painters were wonderfully skillful in the effort. Yet the greatest of them could not help dreaming of being something

better than cameras, and they were always breaking the shackles that their patrons wanted to fasten upon them. But the good Dutch burghers did not like the dreamers very much; in general, they liked their "little masters" better—those little masters who would keep on turning out patient and painfully accurate photographs.

One of the men who was too big to be a



Photo by Bruckmann, Munich

Frans Hals painted this lifelike picture, called "A Nurse and Child." When we look at a work like this one we can understand why people say that Dutch art was above all a matter of making portraits. For though this woman and child are nameless, they are more alive than most named portraits. The Dutch just looked around them and put down what they saw, making a fine portrait of their country—people and life and landscape together. Hals usually painted the people by ones or twos or threes, though sometimes in larger groups. In this picture we can see how kind and human he could make a woman's face, how strong and capable he could make her hands. Even the baby looks real, in spite of its absurd fashionable clothes.